

# REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF HERITAGE COASTS IN ENGLAND



Report to The Countryside Agency  
by Land Use Consultants  
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report evaluates the 32 Heritage Coasts defined in England to determine how effective they have been in achieving their original objectives, the impacts they have had on the management of their coastlines (both terrestrial and marine) and the implications that these have for Natural England's developing policy towards coastal management.

The study has been conducted between January and March 2006. It has drawn primarily on telephone interviews with staff involved in delivering the Heritage Coast purposes and with other stakeholders, and secondly it has used a desk-based analysis of national coastal policy and previous studies on Heritage Coasts.

Many individuals with experience of Heritage Coasts, including a small steering group from the Countryside Agency and the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, have contributed information to the study. Their assistance is gratefully acknowledged. Nonetheless, the study has sought to provide an independent evaluation and any errors or omissions remain the responsibility of the authors.

## **The history of the Heritage Coast designation**

The first work to define the coastline of greatest scenic quality took place during and just after World War II. But it wasn't until 1970, following a decade of concern about the impact that urban development was having on these coasts, that the definition of Heritage Coast status was formally proposed. Reports by the Countryside Commission identified 34 stretches of coast in England and Wales (covering a length of some 730 miles equivalent to 27% of the coastline) of exceptional or very good scenic quality and called for these Heritage Coasts to be given a statutory designation and purposes.

The Government's response accepted the overall objectives and the role for defined areas of Heritage Coast but rejected any new statutory designation, preferring that the existing designation of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (which over-lapped strongly with the proposed Heritage Coasts) should be used instead. This left the adoption, definition and management of Heritage Coast to Local Authorities, in consultation with the Countryside Commission (particularly in terms of the definition of boundaries). The Countryside Commission also indicated that it would provide funding for coastal management to Local Authorities that adopted Heritage Coasts, usually to a rate of 50% of costs. This would fund the employment of a Heritage Coast Officer by the Local Authority and the preparation, by them, of a Management Plan. Although Heritage Coast status would confer no new statutory powers or obligations, they were to be identified on County Structure and Local Development Plans and would be a material consideration in planning terms.

To demonstrate the process of definition and to develop best practice in developing management programmes in Heritage Coasts, the Countryside Commission funded three pilots in the Suffolk, Purbeck and Glamorgan Heritage Coasts which ran successfully during the period 1974 to 1977. There was interest from many Local Authorities during and after the pilot programme and by 1980, 19 stretches of Heritage Coast had been defined latterly, with a further 5 in the 1980s, 7 in the 1990s and 1 in 2001. Full definition of the terrestrial boundaries usually took a little longer. Figure I lists the Heritage Coasts in chronological order of their full definition. A similar programme of definition took place in Wales over the same period (leading to 14 Heritage Coasts accounting for about a third of the Welsh coastline).

**Figure 1. Heritage Coasts in England, listed chronologically by date of full definition**

Name	Lateral def.	Full definition
Sussex	1973	April 1973
Isles Of Scilly	1974	Dec. 1974
North Norfolk	1975	April 1975
Suffolk	1973	Sept. 1979
N Yorks & Cleveland	1974	May 1981
Purbeck	1981	June 1981
West Dorset	1984	Feb. 1984
East Devon	1984	June 1984
Rame Head	1976	April 1986
Gribbin Head – Polperro	1976	April 1986
The Roseland	1976	April 1986
The Lizard	1976	April 1986
Penwith	1976	April 1986
Godrevy – Portreath	1976	April 1986
St Agnes	1976	April 1986
Trevose Head	1976	April 1986

Name	Lateral def.	Full definition
Pentire - Widemouth	1976	April 1986
Hartland (Cornwall)	1976	April 1986
South Devon	1986	Dec. 1986
Spurn	1988	Oct. 1988
Hamstead	1974	Dec. 1988
Tennyson	1974	Dec. 1988
Flamborough Head	1979	Aug. 1989
Hartland (Devon)	1990	Feb. 1990
Lundy	1990	Feb. 1990
Exmoor	1991	April 1991
St Bees Head	1992	Feb. 1992
N. Northumberland	1973	April 1992
North Devon	1992	Aug. 1992
South Foreland	1998	Jan. 1998
Dover-Folkestone	1998	Jan. 1998
Durham	2001	Mar. 2001

### National policy objectives

The most recent national policy framework for Heritage Coasts in England was provided by the Countryside Commission in 1992.

This redefined the purposes of Heritage Coast, and specified that “Every Heritage Coasts should have a management plan incorporating targets (Box 1), and a timetable for their implementation by the year 2000”.

### Box 1. The national purposes and targets of Heritage Coasts

Purposes	Targets (abbreviated)
1. To conserve, protect and enhance the natural beauty of the coasts, including their terrestrial, littoral and marine flora and fauna, and their heritage features of architectural, historical and archaeological interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The creation or retention of a strip of grassland or semi-natural vegetation behind the beach or cliff edge.</li> <li>The removal or amelioration of eyesores</li> <li>The protection and enhancement of landscape features</li> </ul>
2. To facilitate and enhance their enjoyment, understanding and appreciation by the public by improving and extending opportunities for recreational, educational, sporting and tourist activities that draw on, and are consistent with, the conservation of their natural beauty and the protection of their heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A continuous coast path along each Heritage Coast and all rights of way in the Heritage Coast properly managed.</li> </ul>
3. To maintain, and improve (where necessary) the environmental health of inshore waters affecting Heritage Coasts and their beaches through appropriate works and management measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All intensively used beaches on Heritage Coasts to be designated as ‘bathing beaches’ (in line with the EC directive)</li> <li>Litter clearance and collection to be related to the highest standards for amenity beaches</li> </ul>
4. To take account of the needs of agriculture, forestry and fishing, and of the economic and social needs of the small communities on these coasts, by promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development, which in themselves conserve and enhance natural beauty and heritage features	

Although Heritage Coasts are not subject to any statutory development control processes, Planning Policy Guidance Note 20: Coastal Planning (PPG 20), which was published in September 1992, clarified Local Planning Authorities responsibilities towards

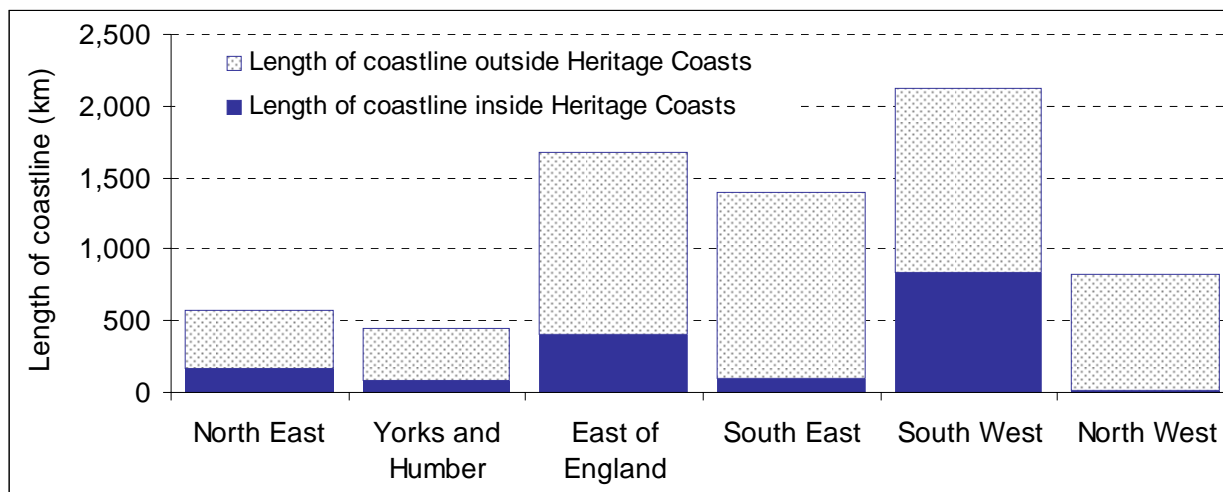
Heritage Coasts. It states “the planning policies to be pursued in Heritage Coasts and the uses and activities which are or are not to be permitted should be defined and local plans should contain clear policies on public access to the coast”.

### The extent of Heritage Coasts

The distribution of Heritage Coasts amongst the English regions is not even. As Figure 2 shows, the South West has by far the greatest length of Heritage Coasts (two thirds of the total length), with the North East, East of England, Yorkshire and Humber and South East all accounting for less than 15% of the total length each. The South

West also has the greatest proportion of its coastline under designation (40%), followed by the North East (30%) and the East of England (24%). Yorkshire and Humberside has 19% of this coastline in Heritage Coasts, the South East 7%, the North West less than 1% and the East Midlands none. The West Midlands has no coastline.

**Figure 2. Lengths of coastline inside and outside Heritage Coasts, by region.**



Source: GIS analysis by this study

There is a large overlap between Heritage Coasts and AONBs and, to a lesser extent, National Parks. Overall 89% of the total Heritage Coasts area in England lies within these designations. Only the Durham, Flamborough Headland, Spurn, Lundy and St Bees Head Heritage Coasts are independent of AONBs or National Parks.

Twelve of the 36 AONBs, and two of the nine National Parks have stretches of Heritage Coast. For eight of the AONBs the Heritage Coasts occupies a substantial proportion of the AONB (the Northumberland Coast, Norfolk Coast, Suffolk Coast and Heaths, Isle of Wight,

South Devon, Cornwall, Isles of Scilly and North Devon AONBs).

In 1993, the National Trust calculated that nearly 40% of the coastline of Heritage Coasts was in their ownership or direct protection. This proportion is likely to have increased since then as the National Trust have continued to purchase land under the Neptune Coastline Campaign.

## **The role of Heritage Coasts to 1995**

During the 20 year period to 1995, Heritage Coasts were one of the most high profile and influential programmes operated by the Countryside Commission. During this period, most Heritage Coasts in England demonstrated successful partnership working between the host Local Authority and the Countryside Commission. In a minority, such as St Bees Head, the initial interest of the Local Authority which led to definition of the Heritage Coast, was not translated into a lasting programme of work.

During this period Heritage Coasts were particularly active in visitor and landscape management, revolving around the post of the Heritage Coast officer, usually based within the Local Authority Countryside Management Team. But most Heritage Coasts seem to have been less successful over this period at providing a strategic overview of land use and landscape protection. Few Heritage Coasts saw the levels of partnership working that are now considered fundamental to rural development initiatives and landscape designations.

## **Heritage Coasts since 1995**

Since 1995, the priority attached to Heritage Coasts by the Countryside Agency has declined, in favour of support for the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and work with rural communities (such as the Market Towns Initiative). As funding by the Countryside Agency to Local Authorities with Heritage Coasts has declined, Heritage Coast units have tended to dissolve, with most Local Authorities transferring their funding and interest to their AONBs (where they exist) or to initiatives in the wider countryside. Where staffing posts with a stronger coastal remit are in place, this is

usually the result of new external funding acquired for specific projects.

Compared to the activity that took place in the 'hey day' of Heritage Coasts, AONBs are now less involved in 'hands on' management but take a more strategic role and rely on the activities of partner organisations to deliver AONB purposes. This difference is less marked in the two National Parks that contain Heritage Coasts (the North York Moors and Exmoor) where their warden service maintains an active presence 'on the ground'.

While regretting the reduction in direct management of the coastal environment by Local Authorities, many consultees recognise the benefits of the more integrated approach which reflects the changed national priorities established for AONBs. There is now more synergy between the objectives pursued by all statutory (and most non-governmental) bodies than was previously the case, accepting that the time needed to develop and maintain these relationships (through strategies and management plans) can divert resources away from actual delivery by these bodies.

## **National co-ordination**

The Heritage Coast Forum provided a valuable function during the period to the mid 1990s when it received core funding to bring together and disseminate experience from Heritage Coast units. Although this role has been partly taken on by the charity Coastnet, its remit is now far wider and its funding is tied to specific projects. As a result, there is little ongoing sharing of best practice between the AONBs and other bodies working in the Heritage Coasts.



## Delivery of Heritage Coast purposes

The decade that has passed since Heritage Coasts operated under a nationally funded and coordinated programme means that it is difficult to be categorical about the success of the designation during this earlier period. Nevertheless, there is good evidence that:

- a) Heritage Coast teams were effective in intervening directly at a local level to protect and improve the coastal landscape, facilitate visitor management and interpretation and involve local communities in the protection of the coastal environment (parts of Purposes 1, 2 and 4).
- c) The environmental health of inshore waters was interpreted narrowly, being primarily associated with reducing the impact of marine pollution (such as litter). There was little work in the marine, as opposed to littoral, environment (Parts of Purpose 1 and Purpose 3).
- c) The adoption of effective planning policies that sought to protect Heritage Coasts' special qualities appears to have been patchy. Most of the effort put into coastal zone planning has not borne fruit (Parts of Purposes 1 and 4).
- d) The programme was successful in developing a positive national profile for the designation as a prestigious accolade that Local Authorities valued.

Overall, while it is not now possible to make a full financial evaluation of the programme, the Countryside Commission and Agency's co-funding of locally-based project officers does seem to have delivered significant benefits against the policy priorities that were current at the time.

Returning to the present, the delivery of Heritage Coast purposes has been superseded in most of the defined coasts by the purposes of the AONB and National Park designations. There are strong similarities between these purposes (particularly the primary purpose of the conservation of natural beauty) and the focus remains on natural beauty, enjoyment and understanding and economic and social well-being of communities. However, these programmes now take a generic approach to the countryside as a whole and the distinctive coastal emphasis of Heritage Coasts is generally not reflected in current activities (with some significant exceptions).

As noted above, there are advantages to the geographically broader and more strategic approach now used in AONBs and National Parks that was often lacking in Heritage Coasts. However, the critical point is that, in the absence of any dedicated delivery agency or multi-agency management plan that has a specific focus on the coastal zone, the needs of this scenically and economically important zone must compete for resources with other areas of the designated landscapes.

The agri-environment schemes (mainly the Countryside Stewardship Scheme in the past and now the Environmental Stewardship scheme) have been key mechanisms for maintaining and enhancing the natural beauty of the wider landscape backing the coast. If these schemes are to help deliver the distinctive public benefits appropriate to the Heritage Coasts, Local Authorities and other agencies supporting Heritage Coast purposes have an important role to play in ensuring adequate targeting of these schemes to the coastal zone and in facilitating applications by landowners. In the absence of active Heritage Coast programmes there is little evidence that

this targeting and facilitation is taking place, even in many of the Heritage Coasts that lie in AONBs or National Parks.

In relation to the second purpose of Heritage Coasts, of promoting public enjoyment and understanding of the Heritage Coast, the reduction in 'hands on' visitor and countryside management has meant a switch to more generic promotion and interpretation, particularly in most of the AONBs.

The needs and views of local communities and businesses appear to receive greater attention in Heritage Coasts now than they did in the early 1990s. Again, this is the result of the broader strategic and partnership-based approach being taken by AONBs and National Parks (particularly in relation to the development of their Management Plans) as well as to the greater national policy priority applied to social inclusion in relation to the environment.

### **Activities in the marine environment**

Heritage Coasts have one purpose that is not covered in AONBs and National Parks - the environmental health of inshore waters. This was narrowly interpreted in the 1990s (relating mainly to freedom of beaches from litter and to bathing water quality) and is now not particularly evident in the current objectives being pursued in Heritage Coasts.

Most coastal AONBs would like to have more involvement in the marine environment but feel constrained by their terrestrial boundary. Heritage Coasts where there is more involvement in marine protection and management issues are those where there are specific marine designations that justify this involvement (such as Marine Nature Reserve and World Heritage Site status).

While people working in Heritage Coasts are conscious of the emerging national and regional activity in relation to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), the Marine Bill and the second round of Shoreline Management Plans (SMP), there has been little significant involvement at the level of most Heritage Coasts to date.

While AONBs and National Parks may not have the technical background in marine and shoreline policy, their inclusive partnership structures and integrating approach to sustainable development merit greater involvement in the local development and implementation of these policies in future

### **The Heritage Coast 'brand'**

Many consultees to this study commented that Heritage Coast status has been, and continues to be, valuable as a 'badge' that has the support of local communities. This status is considered helpful to promote the area for tourism, to highlight the need for policies to address development pressure, and to attract external funding for environmental work. With the cessation of national core funding for Heritage Coasts, this marketing and awareness raising aspect of Heritage Coast status is one of the key reasons why it continues to be kept alive by Local Authorities (when in almost all respects, Heritage Coast purposes are now being delivered under different programmes of work).

### **Options for the future**

These conclusions point the way to a number of options for the future of the Heritage Coast designation.

1. **A national policy development and delivery focus.** It is important that the particular mix of policy challenges facing England's most

scenically attractive coastal areas are recognised at a national level. The combination of high demand for development, high levels of recreational use, a fragile natural environment and, in some coastal communities, the need for economic and social renewal, requires policy solutions that will be unique, or at least specially tailored, to this part of England's landscape.

This suggests a strengthened coastal policy unit in Natural England, working closely with relevant government departments to develop and deliver the appropriate policy solutions. It also suggests a renewed role for a national forum and network of people working in Heritage Coasts.

## 2. **Heritage Coast purposes within AONBs and National Parks.**

Overall, the four national purposes of Heritage Coasts are well suited to current policy demands. To the extent that three of the purposes are very close to the purposes of AONBs and National Parks (which as statutory designations carry more weight) there is no justification for re-imposing these Heritage Coast purposes as separate objectives within these statutory designations. (But, as noted further below, the one unique purpose of Heritage Coasts does require special attention).

However, the lack of a coastal focus on the way AONB and National Park purposes are delivered across most of these designated landscapes means that the distinctive needs and opportunities of coasts are often not being met within the broader strategic approach. Exceptions are where other designations (such as World Heritage Site or EU Marine Natura 2000 status) or other funding programmes (such as EU Objective I,

Leader + or Heritage Lottery Fund) have motivated a coastal focus. Heritage Coast status on its own does not do this (although it is often successful at attracting external funding).

The Management Plan process has proved successful in the past in prioritising actions in Heritage Coasts. The statutory AONB and National Park Management Plans provide the opportunity to do this again, but this is only likely to be realised if coastal needs and opportunities receive specific attention in these Plans.

Natural England should consider issuing guidance to AONB Units and National Park Authorities on how they can address the emerging coastal (and possibly marine) agendas through their statutory Management Plans.

## 3. **Heritage Coast purposes outside the statutory landscape designations.**

In the relatively small length of coastline lying outside AONBs and National Parks, it would appear that delivery of Heritage Coasts purposes depends on an ongoing commitment of national funding to Local Authorities. When this funding ceases, experience suggests that activity declines.

Natural England must make a decision as to whether it wishes there to be active programmes of management planning and delivery in these Heritage Coasts. The evidence from this study suggests that national funding to Local Authorities outside statutory protected landscapes can effectively deliver national environmental priorities for the coast.

## 4. **The Heritage Coast brand.** Even where Local Authorities are not particularly active in delivering Heritage Coast purposes, there is a

high regard for Heritage Coast status because of the way it draws attention to the special qualities of the coast and can attract funding for specific projects. This is further reinforced by interest from a few Local Authorities in defining new sections of Heritage Coast.

If Heritage Coast status is to be maintained as a credible 'brand' standing for coastline of the highest scenic quality, there will be merit in Natural England retaining 'ownership' of the status as an active designation, albeit accepting that in most respects, the purposes of the designation will be delivered through the statutory landscape designations.

- 5. The inter-tidal and marine remit.** The third purpose of Heritage Coasts, relating to the environmental health of inshore waters, is not found in the other landscape designations and is

one that has yet to find full expression. However, the advent of the Marine Bill and the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management give this purpose a new relevance.

Under the current situation, where AONBs and National Parks are uncertain about their remit beyond the mean low water mark, it seems unlikely that they will have a major role to play in these programmes. However, their pursuit of sustainable development and their ways of working through strategic partnerships suggest that they could make a valuable contribution.

If this is to take place, their role will need to be formally recognised and they will need national support from Natural England or Defra to gain the necessary technical expertise to allow them to contribute.

# I. INTRODUCTION

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- I.1. This is the final report of a study for the Countryside Agency Landscape Access and Recreation branch to review and evaluate the thirty-two defined Heritage Coasts in England (see **Figure I.1**).

## **Purpose**

- I.2. This study seeks to evaluate the Heritage Coasts in England in order to determine how effective they have been in achieving their original objectives, the impacts they have had on the management of their coastlines (both terrestrial and marine) and the implications that these have for Natural England's developing policy towards coastal management.
- I.3. More specifically, the brief for the study specified ten bulleted issues that should be addressed. These fall under three main headings.

## ***Management and administration of Heritage Coasts***

- I.4. This heading effectively covers the processes and immediate outputs arising from Heritage Coast status. Research topics have included the structure and role of steering groups, staffing arrangements allocated to the Heritage Coast, the role and effectiveness of management plans, current funding arrangements and use of any external programme funding, as well as a review of how activity changed following the ending of Countryside Commission/Agency funding. The study has sought to identify whether there are particular management and administrative arrangements that are more effective than others, taking account of the different circumstances of Heritage Coasts.

## ***Delivery of national policy objectives***

- I.5. This heading and the following one are concerned with the long term impacts and outcomes that have arisen from Heritage Coast designation. Research topics that relate to the national policy objectives for Heritage Coasts include the extent to which they have:
- conserved, protected and enhanced their natural beauty and cultural heritage;
  - facilitated and enhanced their enjoyment and understanding by the public;
  - maintained the environmental health of their inshore waters and littoral zone;
  - while taking account of the economic and social needs of communities and the key land and marine management business sectors.
- I.6. Other national objectives, such as the Public Service Agreement for the condition of SSSIs, the uptake of Environmental Stewardship and other agri-environment schemes, and the future role of Heritage Coasts in Integrated Coastal Zone Management, were also considered under this heading.

### ***Delivery of local policy objectives***

- I.7. Local authority sponsorship and ownership of Heritage Coasts means that they are often seen as a way of delivering local objectives. These potentially include wider social and economic needs, involving regeneration, tourism, health and education. Research topics include the extent to which Heritage Coasts have been used as a vehicle for delivering specific regional, county or district policies (for instance local development plans, tourism strategies or community plans); levels of local community involvement in setting priorities for the Heritage Coast and local expectations for the future direction and purpose of the Heritage Coast designation.

### **Methodology**

- I.8. The study has been conducted in three main stages during January, February and March 2006, as follows:

**Stage A** involved the initial scoping of the national policy background and a desk-based analysis of information on the Heritage Coasts (split between a qualitative assessment of Management Plans and, within the limited budget allocated, a quantitative analysis of GIS data).

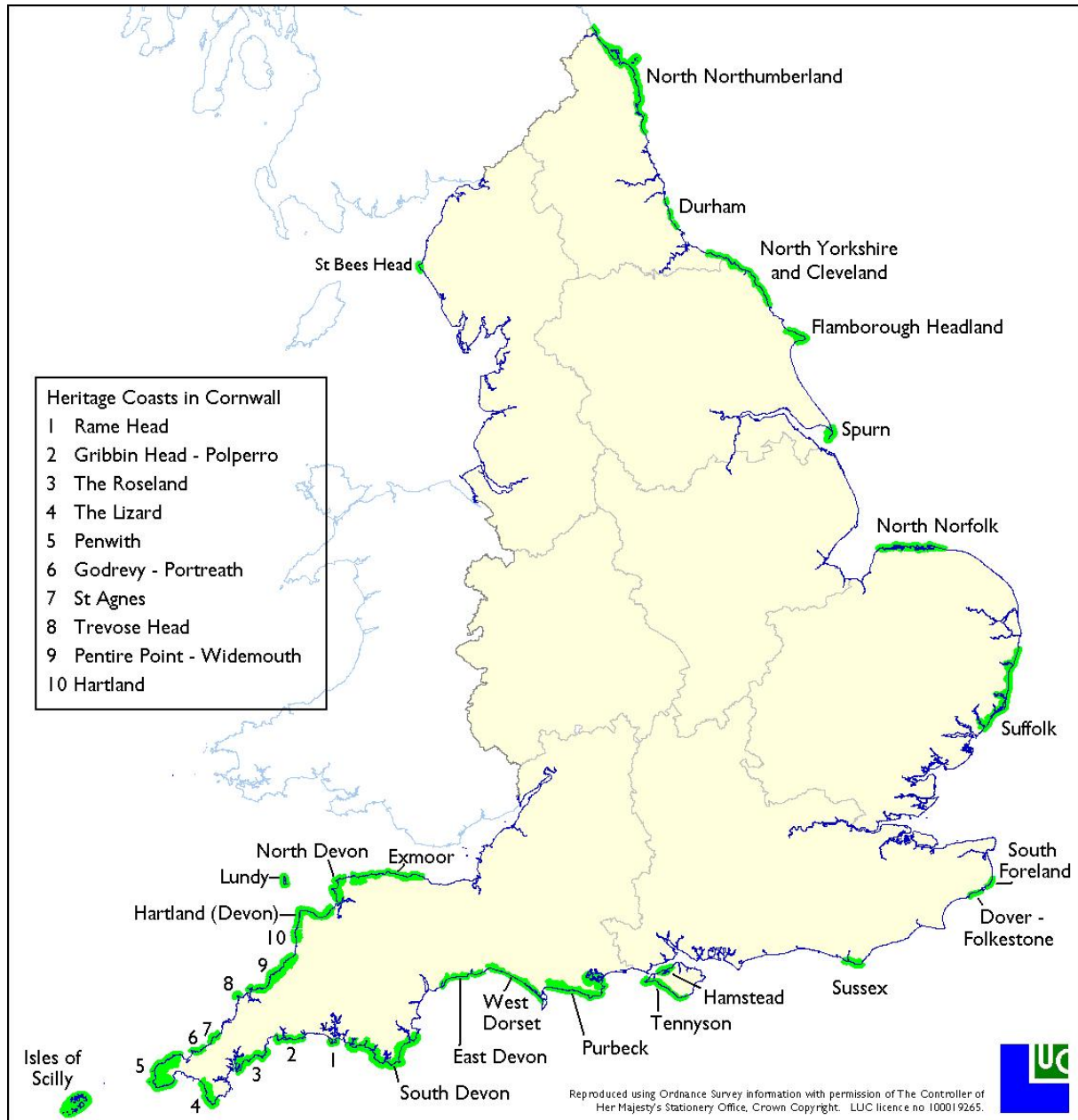
**Stage B** consisted of telephone interviews with staff involved in delivering the Heritage Coast purposes in each defined area, and with other stakeholders and interested parties.

**Stage C** sees the conclusion of the research in a draft report circulated to the steering group for comment before being finalised.

### **Acknowledgements**

- I.9. The study was steered by Sally Rogers and Jacky Martel from the Countryside Agency, and Mary Lewis from the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Many individuals have provided their views and experience, including a number of retired people who were previously Heritage Coast officers or involved in the Heritage Coast programme. The assistance provided by these people is gratefully acknowledged. Nonetheless, the study has sought to provide an independent evaluation and any errors or omissions remain the responsibility of the authors.

**Figure I.1. Location of Heritage Coasts in England**







## 2. BACKGROUND

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- 2.1. This Chapter introduces the place that Heritage Coasts have within public policy for the coasts. It describes their history, and the process by which they have been defined.

### **The special qualities and challenges of England's coasts**

- 2.2. Our coasts are subject to a wide range of competing pressures. Public expectations on coasts of high scenic quality face particularly acute challenges.
- They are an understandably popular place for people to live and face high levels of demand for housing.
  - They are an important recreational resource, both for active pursuits (especially on coastal waters) as well as more tranquil activities.
  - Despite this development pressure and recreational use, many coastal towns have experienced an economic downturn in recent decades, bringing challenges of economic and social renewal.
  - Natural processes on the coast, whether of erosion of the land by the sea, accretion of new land, or the movement of currents and sediments along the coast, are important factors in the dynamic evolution of the landscape, often impacting on human activity.
  - The coastal zone has been a source of building materials, whether it be the cliffs, beaches or marine sediments.
  - Coastal waters have been seen as a convenient place for the disposal of waste, whether it be sewage piped from coastal communities (now being addressed by treatment plants by water companies) or marine dumping of household and municipal waste.
- 2.3. These long standing and competing uses and expectations make our coasts a contested landscape. Although, as this study will show, the protection of the coastal landscape has waxed and waned as a policy priority, the pressures have remained.
- 2.4. The coastal zone is once again rising up the national policy agenda in the form the Marine Bill, the EU requirement to adopt Integrated Coastal Zone planning and the Government's commitment to consider how public access along coasts can be enhanced. As a result, now is an opportune time to consider how the Heritage Coast designation has contributed to resolving these pressures along England's most scenically beautiful coastlines.

### **Origins of the designation**

- 2.5. The origins of Heritage Coasts lie with the work of JA Steers, Professor of Geomorphology at Cambridge University, who was commissioned by the wartime government to survey the coasts of England and Wales to identify the stretches of

greatest scenic quality<sup>1</sup>. His reports were published in 1944 and 1946. This work can be seen as part of the developing national consensus on the protection and designation of the countryside for national beauty and recreation (the reports of Scott, Dower and Hobhouse leading to the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949). Nevertheless, Steers' recommendation to Government that a national coastal planning authority should be established was not adopted (the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act instead giving powers to Local Authorities).

- 2.6. During the 1950s and early 1960s bodies such as the Council for the Preservation of Rural England and National Trust raised concerns about the lack of a consistent approach to coastal planning. In 1963, the Government responded with a circular to Local Authorities<sup>2</sup> which charged them with identifying coastal areas which needed safeguarding “so that natural attractions can be enjoyed to the full”; to zone areas suitable for future development; to take steps to “restore lost amenities ... and create new ones”; and to take account of the impact of future development on areas of scientific interest.
- 2.7. This circular did not have the desired effect, and in 1965, the Minister of Housing and Local Government, responding to concerns about the spread of development along coasts, asked Local Authorities to report on progress against the four tasks identified in the circular, and asked the National Parks Commission to convene a series of regional coastal conferences. In July 1970, the Countryside Commission (which had replaced the National Parks Commission in 1968) issued two reports which drew together the information available from Local Authorities and the regional conferences and on new work by JA Steers updating his earlier surveys<sup>3</sup>. For the first time, these reports introduced the concept of Heritage Coasts and identified 34 stretches of coast in England and Wales (covering a length of some 730 miles equivalent to 27% of the coastline) of exceptional or very good scenic quality. The Countryside Commission called for Heritage Coasts to be given a statutory designation and purposes. The overall objectives of Heritage Coast policy were set out as:
- *“to identify the finest stretches of undeveloped coast;*
  - *to conserve and manage them comprehensively;*
  - *to facilitate and enhance their enjoyment by the public through the promotion and encouragement of recreational activities consistent with the conservation of their fine natural scenery and heritage features”.*
- 2.8. The Government's response<sup>4</sup> accepted the overall objectives and the role for defined areas of Heritage Coast, but rejected any new statutory designation, preferring that the existing designation of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (which over-lapped strongly with the proposed Heritage Coasts) should be used instead. This left the adoption, definition and management of Heritage Coast to Local Authorities, in

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<sup>1</sup> The problems of unplanned coastal development had been highlighted earlier in 1936 in a report by Council for the Preservation of Rural England (Dougill W, 1936)

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Housing and Local Government (1963)

<sup>3</sup> Countryside Commission (1970 a and b)

<sup>4</sup> Given largely in Department of Environment (1972)

consultation with the Countryside Commission (particularly in terms of the definition of boundaries). The Countryside Commission also indicated that it would provide funding for coastal management to Local Authorities that adopted Heritage Coasts, usually to a rate of 50% of costs. Although Heritage Coasts conferred no new statutory powers or obligations, they were identified on County Structure and Local Development Plans and became a material consideration in planning terms.

### **The process of definition**

- 2.9. The Countryside Commission's 1970 Coastal Heritage Report established four main criteria of
  - coastline of exceptionally fine scenic quality;
  - exceeding one mile in length;
  - which is substantially undeveloped; and
  - which contains features of special significance and interest, whether natural or man-made.
- 2.10. Once agreement was reached in principle between the Local Authority and Countryside Commission to define a section of Heritage Coast, the boundary was defined in two ways. Firstly, and most fundamentally, the lateral extent of the coastline (i.e. where the Heritage Coast began and ended) was defined, with a starting assumption that this would follow the sections mapped by JA Steers. Secondly, the landward boundary was to be mapped so that the Local Authority could apply distinctive planning policies to land within this boundary. Significantly, there was to be no defined seaward boundary to the designation: *"The seaward boundary of Heritage Coasts is not specified and in practice can extend as far offshore as the management service can reasonably accommodate"*.
- 2.11. To demonstrate the process of definition and to develop best practice in developing management programmes in Heritage Coasts, the Countryside Commission funded three pilots in the Suffolk, Purbeck and Glamorgan Heritage Coasts. The key outputs of the pilots were the employment of a Heritage Coast Officer located in the Local Authority and the preparation, by them, of a Management Plan. These pilot programmes ran for an initial two years, subsequently extended for a further two years during the period 1974 to 1977. The pilots were considered successful,<sup>5</sup> and demonstrated the importance of the Heritage Coast Officer and the role of the Management Plan as an overarching statement of the Local Authorities policy towards coastal zone management, including development control, countryside management and public recreation.
- 2.12. Even before these pilots were completed, interest from Local Authorities was significant. The first Heritage Coasts to be laterally defined were Sussex (which was also the first to be fully defined), North Northumberland and one of the pilots, Suffolk. Over the next 17 years, to 1992, a further 26 Heritage Coasts were defined. In January 1998 South Foreland and Dover-Folkestone in Kent were defined, and in March 2001 the Durham Heritage Coast was defined. **Figure 2.1** lists the Heritage Coasts in chronological order of their full definition, and **Figure 2.2** shows

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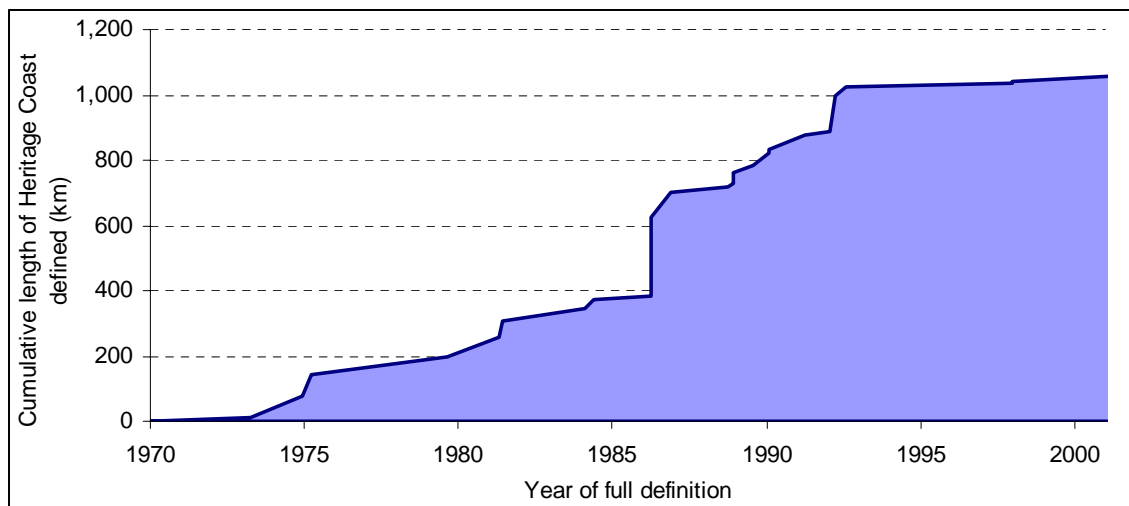
<sup>5</sup> Countryside Commission (1978)

how the total length of defined coastline grew between 1970 and 2000. A similar programme of definition took place in Wales over the same period. In Wales there are 14 defined Heritage Coasts with a total length of almost 500 kilometres, accounting for about a third of the Welsh coastline.

**Figure 2.1 Date of Heritage Coast definition, listed chronologically by date of full definition**

Name	Lateral def.	Full definition
Sussex	1973	April 1973
Isles Of Scilly	1974	Dec. 1974
North Norfolk	1975	April 1975
Suffolk	1973	Sept. 1979
N Yorks & Cleveland	1974	May 1981
Purbeck	1981	June 1981
West Dorset	1984	Feb. 1984
East Devon	1984	June 1984
Rame Head	1976	April 1986
Gribbin Head - Polperro	1976	April 1986
The Roseland	1976	April 1986
The Lizard	1976	April 1986
Penwith	1976	April 1986
Godrevy – Portreath	1976	April 1986
St Agnes	1976	April 1986
Trevoose Head	1976	April 1986
Pentire - Widemouth	1976	April 1986
Hartland (Cornwall)	1976	April 1986
South Devon	1986	Dec. 1986
Spurn	1988	Oct. 1988
Hamstead	1974	Dec. 1988
Tennyson	1974	Dec. 1988
Flamborough Head	1979	Aug. 1989
Hartland (Devon)	1990	Feb. 1990
Lundy	1990	Feb. 1990
Exmoor	1991	April 1991
St Bees Head	1992	Feb. 1992
N. Northumberland	1973	April 1992
North Devon	1992	Aug. 1992
South Foreland	1998	Jan. 1998
Dover-Folkestone	1998	Jan. 1998
Durham	2001	Mar. 2001

**Figure 2.2 Chart showing progressive increase in the length of coast defined from 1970 to 2000**



### Extensions and further new definitions

- 2.13. Since their original definition, several of the Heritage Coasts have been extended. For instance, North Yorkshire and Cleveland was extended in 1981 and North Northumberland was extended in 1995. Consideration was also given to defining

some areas without agreement being reached. For instance, in the late 1990s parts of the Morecombe Bay coastline were considered as a candidate section but were not taken forward. Similarly, an extension of the Purbeck Heritage Coast to include the Isle of Portland has been considered (in view of the inclusion of the Isle in the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site) but has not progressed.

- 2.14. Since the original definition in 2001, Durham Heritage Coast has aspired to include improving stretches of once degraded coast at Castle Eden Denemouth to form a continuous coastal strip. In North Northumberland, the Castle Morpeth Local Plan highlights a potential eastward extension in the Druridge Bay area, and in the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast there is interest from the Local Authority for a southward extension to take in Filey Brigg. There is ongoing interest from a few Local Authorities, such as Colchester Borough Council, in the potential for defining entirely new stretches of Heritage Coast.
- 2.15. Colchester Borough Council first identified a stretch of the Mid Essex Coastline as potentially suitable for Heritage Coast definition in 1999. Although no formal definition has taken place, the area is now more closely described as stretching from Shoebury Ness in the south to Jaywick in the north. Interest in the definition arose because of concern from local people about the need to constrain development of the coast. Although sections of the coast are already designated for their nature conservation importance (as 'Ramsar' sites and Site of Special Scientific Interest), a formal landscape designation such as Heritage Coast was felt to provide additional helpful protection. Further progress with this and other new definitions is unlikely without new national funding.

### **Local Authority motivations for adopting Heritage Coast status**

- 2.16. It is difficult, given the length of time since most Heritage Coasts were defined, to be clear about the motivations behind Local Authorities' adoption of Heritage Coasts. It is evident that, for most of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, Heritage Coasts attracted more funding and had a higher profile in public policy than AONBs. Consultees to this study commented that having the Heritage Coast 'badge' allowed Local Authorities to bid successfully for other sources of funding from central government or its agencies. It also conferred a prestigious accolade on the area which was often useful for marketing tourism and provided the coastal zone with distinctive visitor interest.
- 2.17. There was also a close match between the work of Heritage Coast Officers and the Local Authority Countryside Management Services that also received funding from the Countryside Commission. Frequently, Local Authorities used their Heritage Coast funding to create a Coast and Countryside Service, providing a greater resource available to the Local Authority for issues such as recreation management and public interpretation in coastal areas that had a high public demand for such activities.
- 2.18. Local Authorities may also have felt that adopting the Heritage Coast enabled them to resolve the conflicting pressures of development and protection more satisfactorily, through policies adopted in the Local Plan.

## Further development of national policy

- 2.19. The national policy framework for Heritage Coasts in England was provided by the Countryside Commission in 1992. It redefined the objectives of Heritage Coast as follows<sup>6</sup>:

*“The finest stretches of coast justify national recognition as Heritage Coasts. They should be given effective protection and management: stronger measures should apply there than elsewhere. The main objectives for Heritage Coasts are:*

- *to conserve, protect and enhance the natural beauty of the coasts, including their terrestrial, littoral and marine flora and fauna, and their heritage features of architectural, historical and archaeological interest;*
- *to facilitate and enhance their enjoyment, understanding and appreciation by the public by improving and extending opportunities for recreational, educational, sporting and tourist activities that draw on, and are consistent with, the conservation of their natural beauty and the protection of their heritage features;*
- *to maintain, and improve (where necessary) the environmental health of inshore waters affecting Heritage Coasts and their beaches through appropriate works and management measures;*
- *to take account of the needs of agriculture, forestry and fishing, and of the economic and social needs of the small communities on these coasts, by promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development, which in themselves conserve and enhance natural beauty and heritage features”.*

- 2.20. Critically, the Countryside Commission highlighted the importance of the marine environment, and in particular the need to maintain the environmental quality of inshore waters affecting Heritage Coasts. The document identifies the threats of litter and chemical pollution to the scenic value and public enjoyment of coasts as priorities.

- 2.21. The Commission’s 1992 policy statement also drew attention to the ‘Sandford Principle’ which applies in National Parks and the state makes clear should also apply in Heritage Coasts. It states that *“where natural beauty and recreation are in irreconcilable conflict, then the former should prevail, but only where efforts to resolve the conflict by good planning and management have failed”.*

- 2.22. The policy statement also specifies that *“Every Heritage Coasts should have a management plan incorporating targets [see below], and a timetable for their implementation by the year 2000. Many of the targets involve action by a range of organisations, reinforcing the need for all organisations with coastal responsibilities to embrace the objectives and targets”.* Specifically, there should be targets for:

- *“the creation or retention of a strip of grassland or semi-natural vegetation along Heritage Coasts behind the beach or cliff edge, normally accommodating the coastal path, or where appropriate in the landscape, of a field’s width;*
- *the removal or amelioration of eyesores identified in the management plan;*

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<sup>6</sup> Countryside Commission (1992).

- *the protection and enhancement of landscape features identified in the management plan;*
- *a continuous coast path along each Heritage Coast and all rights of way in the Heritage Coast properly managed;*
- *litter clearance and collection to be related to the highest standards for amenity beaches, as set out in the Code of Practice issued by the Department of Environment; and*
- *all intensively used beaches on Heritage Coasts to be designated as ‘bathing beaches’, complying with the European Community directive on bathing water quality”.*

- 2.23. In 1993 the Countryside Commission estimated the cost of delivering most of these targets<sup>7</sup>. It was assumed that these costs would cover activity to 2000 and would be used as the basis for the Commission to bid to government for the necessary funding. The cost of achieving all the targets (except those on the continuous coast path and bathing water quality) amounted to £9.59 million, with the creation of a strip of grassland and the amelioration of eyesores both accounting for £3 million each.
- 2.24. During the 1970s and 1980s the Countryside Commission continued to seek to make Heritage Coasts a statutory designation akin to AONBs, in which permitted development rights were withdrawn, as a means of protecting the Heritage Coasts outside AONBs and National Parks against development pressures. However, with the introduction of Planning Policy Guidance Note 20: Coastal Planning (PPG 20) in September 1992, the Commission accepted that the designation would remain non-statutory.
- 2.25. PPG 20 clarified and formalised Local Planning Authorities responsibilities towards Heritage Coasts. It states “*the planning policies to be pursued in Heritage Coasts and the uses and activities which are or are not to be permitted should be defined and local plans should contain clear policies on public access to the coast*”. This study has not compared the content of Local Plans in Heritage Coasts before and after PPG 20, but the wide variety in the way current Local Plans address protection of Heritage Coasts suggest that its adoption has been patchy.
- 2.26. During 1996 the policy priorities of the new Countryside Agency were largely determined by the Government’s Rural White Paper. This was coupled with the fact that the period of pump priming for most of the Heritage Coasts was coming to an end. As a result, Heritage Coasts received little priority in the work of the Agency from the mid 1990s.
- 2.27. The way in which Heritage Coasts developed during the late 1990s and early 2000s depended to a large extent on whether they lay inside an AONB or National Park. Those inside the designated landscapes tended to be drawn into the management planning process (especially since the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 when statutory management plans were drawn up for AONBs). Outside the designated

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<sup>7</sup> Countryside Commission (1994). Heritage Coasts – Achievements and Progress. Countryside Commission paper 94/57, reporting on a report to the Commission by the Centre for Environmental Interpretation dated May 1993

landscapes, with the withdrawal of Countryside Agency core funding, the Heritage Coasts have depended on the priority given to coast and countryside management by the Local Authority. In Cornwall for instance, all the District Councils except North Cornwall have wound up their Coast and Countryside Service, and responsibility for the Heritage Coasts has passed to the Cornwall AONB unit which is based in the County Council. The exception is Durham Heritage Coast, where after the multimillion pound investment to clean up the industrially degraded coastline the Countryside Agency supported the subsequent definition as Heritage Coast in 2001, and has provided local authorities with funding support for a coastal management team at a gradually tapering percentage.

- 2.28. This has remained the case until May 2005 when the establishment of policy agendas for Natural England, the Government's focus on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, the proposed Marine Bill, and the consideration of public access along coasts following the CROW Act have once again raised the profile of Heritage Coasts.



### 3. THE EXTENT AND CHARACTER OF HERITAGE COASTS

- 3.1. Information on the boundaries of Heritage Coasts held by the Countryside Agency is based primarily on the hand-drawn maps that were prepared when they were first defined. Since they are non-statutory designations there has never been a need to define them precisely and, although the terrestrial boundary appears to have been clearly identified on paper maps, the seaward extent of most, if not all, Heritage Coasts appears not to have been. Whereas AONBs and National Parks usually extend to the Mean Low Water Mark, Heritage Coasts' purposes go beyond this to cover the environmental health of inshore waters. Despite this, the seaward boundary was deliberately not defined (paragraph 2.11), allowing Local Authorities to use the Heritage Coast definition to address this issue where it felt it necessary.
- 3.2. Data provided by the Countryside Agency on the length of coastline and area covered by Heritage Coasts is shown in **Figure 3.1**. It is understood that this is based on the information calculated manually for each Heritage Coast upon in its original definition.

**Figure 3.1 Countryside Agency data on the length and area of Heritage Coasts**

Name	Length (km)	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
North Northumberland	110	133
Durham	14	6
N Yorks & Cleveland	57	67
Flamborough Headland	19	35
Spurn	18	18
North Norfolk	64	95
Suffolk	57	122
South Foreland	8	6
Dover-Folkestone	8	4
Sussex	13	23
Hamstead	11	18
Tennyson	34	25
Purbeck	50	165
West Dorset	41	59
East Devon	27	35
South Devon	75	129

Name	Length (km)	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
Rame Head	8	4
Gribbin Head - Polperro	24	26
The Roseland	53	55
The Lizard	27	51
Penwith	54	157
Isles Of Scilly	64	23
Godrevy - Portreath	9	12
St Agnes	11	12
Trevoze Head	4	1
Pentire Pt - Widemouth	52	110
Hartland (Cornwall)	11	26
Hartland (Devon)	37	54
Lundy	14	5
North Devon	32	87
Exmoor	45	64
St Bees Head	6	6

Note: The area encompasses the terrestrial area to the Low Water Mark

- 3.3. This information was subsequently transferred to a digital format by the Countryside Agency for analysis by Geographic Information System (GIS) software. This study has used these digitised boundaries of Heritage Coasts, obtained from the MAGIC website ([www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk)), together with the Ordnance Survey's OS Strategic GB Coastline data to recalculate the length and terrestrial area of Heritage Coasts in each of the Government Regions. In this contract, data have not been recalculated for each of the individual Heritage Coasts.

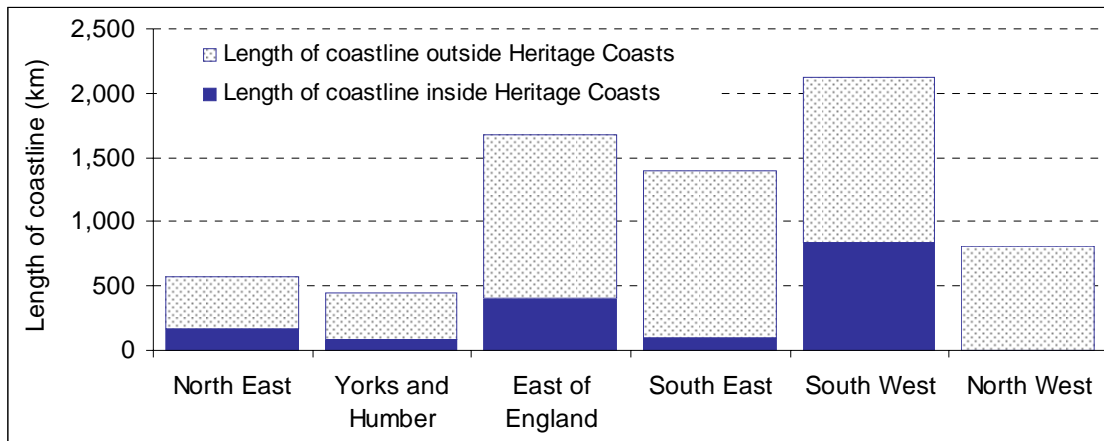
- 3.4. The information calculated in this way differs significantly from that used previously by the Countryside Agency (**Figure 3.2**). With the exception of the Yorkshire and Humberside Region, the lengths calculated by this study are significantly greater than those obtained from the Countryside Agency (by one third for England as a whole). These differences are likely to be due to differences in the way the coastline has been defined. The figures calculated in this study reflect sections of the OS Coastline data and are therefore determined by this definition of the coastline.
- 3.5. Any definition of a coastline using GIS will always be a simplification. There will be variations between different datasets in terms of the scale (and hence level of detail), and also potentially in the tide-mark chosen, and the degree to which estuaries and rivers are followed inland and considered to be part of the coastline. The OS coastline data on which this study has calculated is defined by Ordnance Survey from their 1:250,000 scale basemap product and follows the rivers and estuaries inland to the limit of tidal influence. It seems likely that the Countryside Agency data was based on a more smoothed coastline.
- 3.6. In contrast, the terrestrial area of Heritage Coasts calculated by this study is less than that obtained from the Countryside Agency for each region (being 13% less for England as a whole). The terrestrial area of Heritage Coasts in this study was determined as those portions of the Countryside Agency Heritage Coasts dataset that were inland from the Ordnance Survey coastline data. If an alternative representation of the coastline were used this would define different terrestrial areas which could explain the variation in these figures.

**Figure 3.2 The regional length and area of Heritage Coasts – differences in the figures obtained from the Countryside Agency and by this study**

	England	North East	Yorks & Humber	Eastern	South East	South West	North West
Length (km) CA	1,057	124	94	121	74	638	6
Length (km) This study	1,611	172	83	411	98	841	6
Variation	34.4%	27.9%	-13.3%	70.6%	24.5%	24.1%	0.0%
Area (ha) CA	163,408	13,909	12,024	21,688	7,732	107,449	606
Area (ha) This study	144,579	11,433	8,605	16,240	6,670	99,322	564
Variation	-13.0%	-21.7%	-39.7%	-33.5%	-15.9%	-8.2%	-7.4%

- 3.7. Whichever source of data is used, the distribution of Heritage Coasts amongst the English regions is not even. As **Figure 3.3** shows, the South West has by far the greatest length of Heritage Coasts (two thirds of the total length) with, the North East, East of England, Yorkshire and Humber, and South East all accounting for less than 15% of the total length each. The South West also has the greatest proportion of its coastline under designation (40%), followed by the North East (30%) and the East of England (24%). Yorkshire and Humberside has 19% of this coastline in Heritage Coasts, the South East 7%, the North West less than 1% and the East Midlands none. The West Midlands has no coastline.

**Figure 3.3 Lengths of coastline inside and outside Heritage Coasts, by region.**



Source: GIS analysis by this study

- 3.8. From the outset, there was a disposition in favour of designating sections of coast that can be described as having a ‘hard’ landscape character such as headlands, sections of cliff, or rocky shore. In contrast, ‘soft’ coastal landscapes of beaches, estuaries, or salt marsh were not identified as priorities for definition. The Heritage Coasts in the South West illustrate this. In this region it is the cliff sections of coast, and particularly the headlands such as Trevoise and Rame, that are defined rather than the lower sections of beach and dune (such as Dawlish Warren, Par Sands or Hayle Towans) or the estuaries (such as the Exe, Dart, Tamar or Fal). There are however exceptions in the South West and elsewhere. For instance, Braunton Sands (North Devon), Poole Harbour (Purbeck), Stifkey Marshes (North Norfolk) and Holy Island Sands (North Northumberland) all lie within Heritage Coasts.

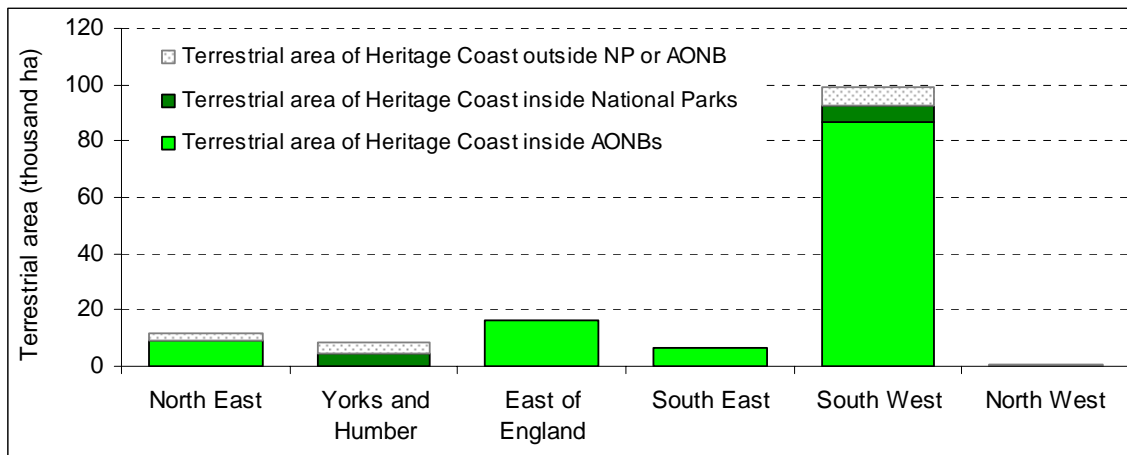
### **Overlap with AONBs and National Parks**

- 3.9. GIS analysis from the sources described above also reveals the large overlap between Heritage Coasts and AONBs and, to a lesser extent, National Parks (**Figures 3.4 and 3.5**). Overall 89% of the total Heritage Coasts area in England lies within these designations. Only the Durham, Flamborough Headland, Spurn, Lundy and St Bees Head Heritage Coasts are independent of AONBs or National Parks.
- 3.10. Twelve of the 36 AONBs, and two of the nine National Parks, have stretches of Heritage Coast. For eight of the AONBs the Heritage Coasts occupies a substantial proportion of the AONB (the Northumberland Coast, Norfolk Coast, Suffolk Coast and Heaths, Isle of Wight, South Devon, Cornwall, Isles of Scilly and North Devon AONBs).

**Figure 3.4 The proportion of the terrestrial area of Heritage Coasts contained within AONBs and National Parks, by region**

	England	North East	Yorks & Humber	Eastern	South East	South West	North West
Heritage Coast area inside AONBs	82%	82%	0%	100%	97%	87%	0%
Heritage Coast area inside National Parks	7%	0%	55%	0%	0%	6%	0%

**Figure 3.5. Terrestrial areas of Heritage Coasts inside AONBs and National Parks, by region**



### Overlap with National Trust property

- 3.11. In 1965 the National Trust launched Enterprise Neptune with a target of raising sufficient funding to purchase and protect 900 miles of outstanding natural or historic coastal land. The first purchases were Whiteford Burrows on the Gower Peninsula in Wales and the Newtown River estuary on the Isle of Wight. The first £2 million was raised in 1973, rising to £5 million in 1981. To date the initiative has raised over £45 million and more than 700 miles of coastline have been acquired. The Trust has been assisted by direct grants from the Countryside Commission and by relief from 90% of the Capital Gains Tax if the Countryside Commission or Agency considered the land to be of outstanding scenic value.
- 3.12. In 1999 the Trust relaunched the initiative as the Neptune Coastline Campaign with four main aims:
  - to raise funds to help save coastline under threat;
  - to acquire and protect every type of fine coastline;
  - to increase public awareness of the dangers to the coastline; and
  - to influence and to work in partnership with others to maintain sustainable coastal ownership and management practices.
- 3.13. Not surprisingly, there is a strong overlap between land purchased by the National Trust and the Heritage Coasts. In 1993 the National Trust calculated that nearly

40% of the coastline of Heritage Coasts was in their ownership or direct protection<sup>8</sup>. This proportion is likely to have increased since then, as the National Trust have continued to purchase land.

- 3.14. However, analysis by this study based on the GIS data for the Heritage Coasts (referred to above), and GIS data obtained from the National Trust on their land ownership suggests that, on the basis of land area, rather than length of coastline, the National Trust's influence is much less at around 15% (**Figure 3.6**). This is because most of the National Trust's coastal properties lie right against the coast itself, with much less of the inland area under their protection. The data obtained from the National Trust is indicative of boundaries of land owned by the National Trust and land leased to the Trust, but does not definitively indicate land managed by the Trust. The majority of the National Trust's land is tenanted and farmed with no automatic right of public access.

**Figure 3.6. The proportion of the terrestrial area of Heritage Coasts owned by the National Trust, by region**

	England	North East	Yorks & Humber	Eastern	South East	South West	North West
Heritage Coast area owned by National Trust	15%	6%	5%	14%	23%	16%	0.1%

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<sup>8</sup> The figures, quoted in Heritage Coast Forum (1993) are 595 miles of Heritage Coast of which 235 miles were under National Trust protection



## 4. STRATEGIC APPROACHES AND ACTION PLANNING

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### Introduction

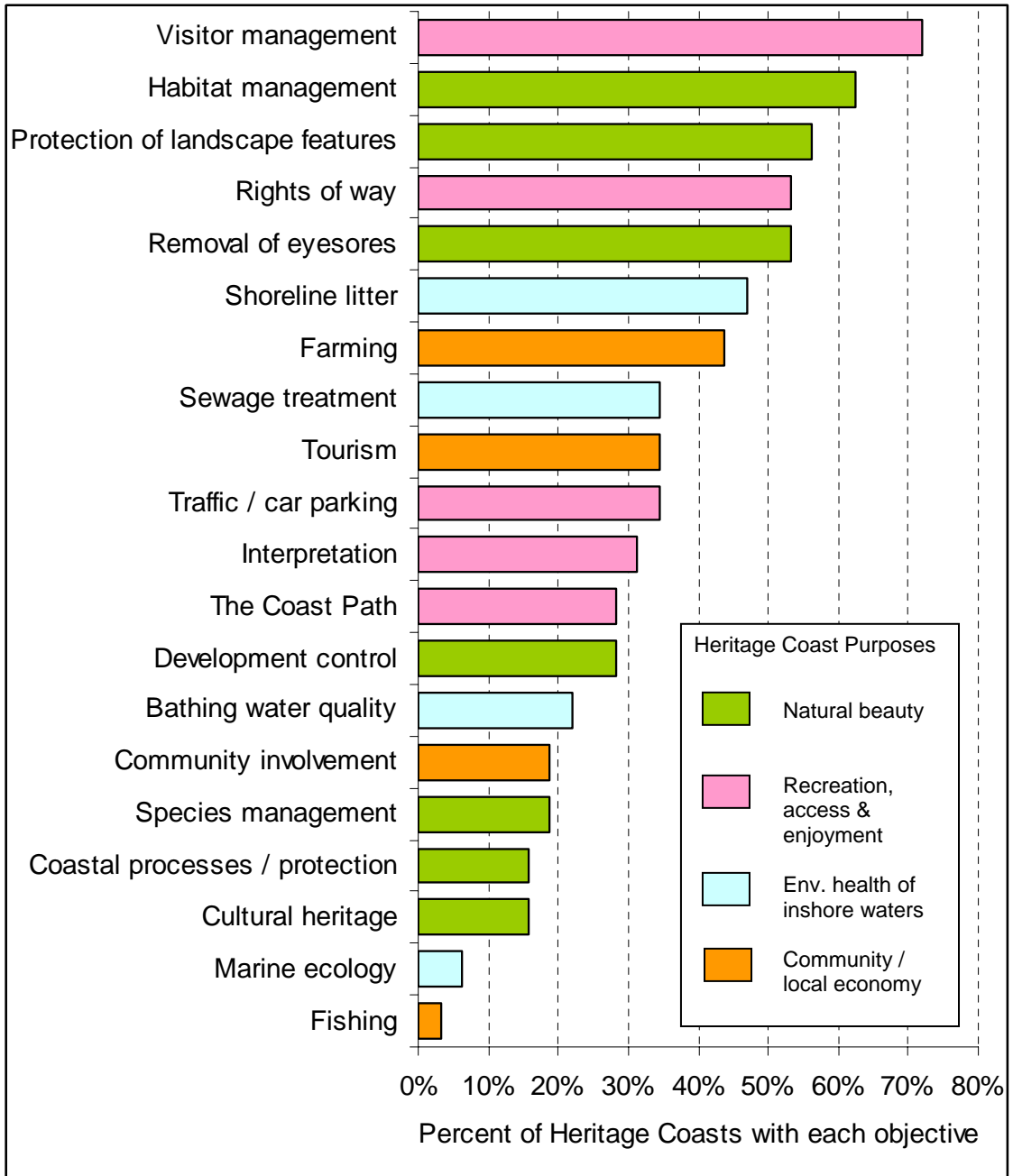
- 4.1. This Chapter examines how public policy and intervention to deliver Heritage Coast objectives have been, and are now being, prioritised in each of the Heritage Coasts. As noted earlier, the development of a management plan was seen as one of the key outputs of Heritage Coasts when they were first defined, providing the integrating framework that link a range of different activities to the national purposes and targets of the Heritage Coast designation.
- 4.2. As explained in Chapter 2, the funding and policy attention given to Heritage Coasts has declined in the last ten years, being replaced by increased focus on AONBs. Before reviewing how the AONBs and other bodies taking the policy lead in Heritage Coasts are now setting the strategic objectives, it is interesting to examine the situation in the early 1990s when more Heritage Coast-specific action was taking place.

### Key objectives and issues addressed by Heritage Coasts in the early 1990s

- 4.3. In 1993 The Heritage Coast Forum drew up a gazetteer of all Heritage Coasts then defined in England and Wales. As part of a profile of each Heritage Coast, this document listed the 'Key Heritage Coast Issues' under the headings of the four national purposes of Heritage Coasts. This study has re-analysed these issues, and this analysis is illustrated in **Figure 4.1** showing the frequency with which each issue occurs. The following conclusions arise from this analysis:
  - In general, the four purposes are represented at many different levels across the Heritage Coasts (i.e. there is no strong polarisation of one purpose being more important).
  - However, the five issues that are found in more than half of the Heritage Coasts all fall under the first two purposes of Natural Beauty (the issues of habitat management, protection of landscape features and removal of eyesores) and recreation, access and enjoyment (visitor management and rights of way).
  - Conversely, the third (community and economy) and fourth (environmental health of inshore waters) purposes are mentioned for fewer of the Heritage Coasts. It is also significant that there are few issues under these two purposes (four each compared to seven for the first purpose and five for the second). This suggests that the last two purposes were less well developed as priorities for Heritage Coasts than the first two.
  - Finally, some of the less frequent issues are worth noting. Of the nine least frequent issues, five relate specifically to the coastal or marine environment (the coast path, bathing water quality, coastal processes / protection, marine ecology and fishing), whereas in the top nine, only one does (shoreline litter). Cultural

heritage is the third least frequent issue which might strike some people as strange given the 'heritage' label attached to the designation's name.

**Figure 4.1 The principle issues addressed by Heritage Coasts in 1993**



Source: Analysis by this study of issues identified in Heritage Coast Forum (1993)



## Review of historical Heritage Coast management plans

4.4. The management plans that were prepared for each Heritage Coast after they were first defined, and reviewed thereafter by the Heritage Coast officer, are becoming difficult to get hold of. However, this study has reviewed three of these documents. These are the Isle of Wight Heritage Coast Plan (draft, 1987), the Northumberland Coast Management Plan (1993) and Spurn Heritage Coast Management Strategy (March 1996). Although there is no way of knowing whether this small sample is representative of all the Heritage Coast management plans of this period, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- **Zoning for development.** An early focus of the Heritage Coasts was the zoning of different areas for development control and countryside management purposes according to the existing level of recreational use and conservation priority. The earlier Heritage Coast management plans reviewed make reference to this zoning concept, but there is little evidence of this approach being integrated with the other aspects of the plan. Discussion during this study with consultees who were involved at that time, suggest that the practical uses of zoning were never fully explored and this process is not evident in the more recent plans reviewed in this study.
- **Management plan structure.** Of the three Heritage Coast management plans examined, each varied in terms of approach and structure with regards to their management styles, making it difficult to draw any firm conclusions about common practice. The detail applied to local coastal conditions, problems and opportunities seemed on the whole very extensive compared to the level of detail encountered in AONB and NP management strategies. In particular the Northumberland Coast Management Plan had a very detailed breakdown of its coastline, identifying and describing eight distinct areas for which coast wide policies were developed into specific action proposals. In contrast current day AONB management plans rarely go into such a detail on the characterisation of the coastline, and tend to have coast wide objectives and policies, rather than area specific actions.

## Current priorities for Heritage Coasts

4.5. For each of the Heritage Coasts this study has examined and prepared a brief analysis of the Management Plan or Strategy that was identified (usually by the primary consultee in each Heritage Coast) as being the most relevant to delivering the Heritage Coast purposes. For each of these plans, the study examined the extent to which it set objectives, policies and actions (these being the 'building blocks' of AONB Management Plans recommended by the Countryside Agency) that related to each of the Heritage Coast national purposes<sup>9</sup>. Where possible, from the wording of the document, an attempt was made to determine the extent to which generic objectives, policies and actions apply more specifically to the coastal parts of the area covered by the management plan.

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<sup>9</sup> The distinction between objectives (which state the intention to do something), policies (which explain how this will be done) and actions (which explain when and by whom it will be done) helps clarify the extent to which each management plan addresses each of the national purposes

4.6. The following conclusions can be drawn from this analysis, which is illustrated in **Figure 4.2**.

- In the majority of Heritage Coasts that lie in AONBs or National Parks, it is the management plan for this statutory designation<sup>10</sup> that is now the principal document setting out how Heritage Coast purposes will be met.
- In the few Heritage Coasts that are not in an AONB or National Park, only Durham has a 'live' Heritage Coast plan. The Coastal Forum Strategy prepared for the East Riding coastline (including Flamborough Headland and Spurn) in 2003 does not appear to be active. Lundy Island has English Nature's Marine Nature Reserve Management Plan. St Bee's Head has no current management plan.
- Current management plans provide good generic coverage of three of the four national Heritage Coast purposes, covering natural beauty; recreation, access and enjoyment; and the community and local economy.
- The other national purpose (the environmental health of inshore waters) is evident in fewer management plans, although where it is covered, this tends to be (not surprisingly) in a more specifically coastal way. However, there are examples of plans with generic objectives, covering for instance reducing pollution, that clearly have an impact on marine water quality. One example of this can be seen in the Isles of Scilly, where marine pollution, especially from passing ships, is a particular problem. The AONB management plan for this area contains several such policies/actions:
  - MC8. To encourage the adoption of land and waste management practices that minimise the discharge of nutrients, wastes, soil sediments and toxins into the water environment; and
  - MC9. To support initiatives to improve the monitoring and management of shipping movements in Scilly's waters and reduce related negative environmental impacts such as pollution incidents.
- As might be expected, management plans with a strong geographical focus on coastal areas include more objectives, policies and actions that are specifically coastal in nature (for instance contrasting the plans for the Northumberland Coast and Durham Heritage Coast with those for the Kent Downs AONB and Exmoor National Park).

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<sup>10</sup> In AONBs, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires the constituent Local Authorities (or Conservation Board where they exist) to prepare a management plan. In National Parks, this duty falls on the National Park Authority under the Environment Act 1995

**Figure 4.2 Current management plans in Heritage Coasts and their relationship to Heritage Coast purposes**

Heritage Coast	Management Plan Type	Date	Relationship to HC Purposes			
			1	2	3	4
North Northumberland	AONB MP	2004 – 2009	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>
Durham	HC MP	2004 – 2010	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>
North Yorks & Cleveland	Coastal Strategy	2004 – 2009	O	O	O	O
Flamborough Headland	HC MP	2003 (Not formally adopted)	<b>OP</b>	<b>OP</b>	<b>OP</b>	<b>OP</b>
Spurn						
North Norfolk	AONB MP	2004 – 2009	OPA	OPA	-	OP
Suffolk	AONB MP	2002 – 2007	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	-	OP
South Foreland	AONB MP		OPA	OPA	<b>OP</b>	OPA
Dover- Folkestone						
Sussex	HC MP Draft	2006	<b>OA</b>	<b>OA</b>	<b>OA</b>	<b>OA</b>
Hamstead	AONB MP	2004 – 2009	OPA	OPA	<b>OP</b>	OPA
Tennyson						
Purbeck	World Heritage Site MP	2003	OP	OP	-	OP
West Dorset						
East Devon	AONB (& WHS)	2004 – 2009	OPA	-	-	OPA
South Devon	AONB MP	2004 – 2009	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>
Rame Head	AONB MP	2004 – 2009	PA	PA	<b>PA</b>	<b>PA</b>
Gribbin Head – Polperro						
The Roseland						
The Lizard						
Penwith						
Godrevy – Portreath						
St Agnes						
Isles Of Scilly	AONB MP	2004 – 2009	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>
Trevoze Head	C&CS Delivery Plan (& AONB MP)	2005 – 2006	<b>OA</b>	<b>OA</b>	-	<b>OA</b>
Pentire Point - Widemouth						
Hartland (Cornwall)						
Hartland (Devon)	AONB MP	2004 – 2010	<b>OPA</b>	OPA	OPA	OPA
North Devon						
Lundy	Marine NR MP	2001	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	<b>OPA</b>	
Exmoor	NP MP	2001 – 2006	<b>OP</b>	OP	<b>OP</b>	OP
St Bees Head	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Analysis by this study

**Key:**

HC purposes:	1: Natural beauty	2: Public enjoyment & understanding
	3: Env. health of inshore waters	4: Economic and social development
Management Plan content	O: Objective, P: Policy, A: Action	
Text in <b>bold</b> :	Management plan directly refers to coastal issues	
Text not in <b>bold</b> :	Management plan indirectly covers coast as part of wider coverage	

- 4.7. Most AONB management plans featured general coastal aims and objectives which conformed to the principles and purposes of AONBs. These varied substantially by AONB in terms of scope and content, but there were also obvious trends. These differences were to some extent also contributed to by the varying character of the coastlines pertaining to each area. Examples of the most frequently occurring aims and objectives found within the management plan documents were:
- protecting, maintaining and enhancing the landscape character of the coastline;
  - protecting marine/transitional habitats/zones/marine sites;
  - working towards sustainable management;
  - maintaining/improving ROW management /access infrastructure;
  - historic environment/cultural heritage;
  - maintaining fishing /maritime employment base supporting local community;
  - habitat protection;
  - education /enjoyment and understanding, recreation; and
  - economic and social needs.
- 4.8. There were also a variety of relatively individual aims and objectives, some of which were felt to go beyond the scope of the AONB remit. These showed a contrasting picture of management priorities and implementation. In some cases, such as North Devon, previous Heritage Coast commitments had been drawn into the AONB management plan at the level of policies and actions, but were less evident in the overall objectives of the plan, that reflected current national and AONB-wide priorities. The following are examples of these kinds of policies that would appear to be carried forward from Heritage Coast plans with less connection to current AONB objectives:
- promote high standards of water quality/litter management;
  - improve understanding of coastal processes;
  - maintain effective coastal pollution contingency plans; and
  - integration with adjoining areas and actively promoting ICZM.

#### **Contrasting the strategic approaches used now and in the 1990s**

- 4.9. It is clear that there has been a change in the way that the purposes of Heritage Coasts have been pursued in the last 15 years. This change has occurred because of the shift in emphasis from the Heritage Coast designation to AONBs as the vehicle for delivering these purposes. The earlier Heritage Coast management plans tended to rely on detailed spatial planning and establishment of plans of work within zoned areas, usually with the Local Authority as the principle or only delivery body.
- 4.10. In contrast, the current management plans of coastal AONBs and National Parks focus more on setting the generic strategic priorities for all partner bodies, with the coastal zone treated as one homogenous area (if it is distinguished at all). Actions in these management plans tend to 'fine-tune' programmes operated by a range of partners.

- 4.11. Many consultees welcomed the more inclusive and integrating nature of current management plans, which ensure that a stronger 'value-adding' consensus is developed amongst all relevant bodies, leading to more effective outcomes. They felt that the earlier Local Authority centred approach meant that Heritage Coast purposes were often pursued in isolation and without making best use of other programmes of work. The effort that Local Authorities put towards the prescriptive zoning of land in the coastal strip for different uses (for instance identifying areas suitable for development, active recreation and low levels of public access) appears not borne fruit since this zonation is rarely present in current management plans and planning policies.
- 4.12. However, it was also regretted by some consultees that the current 'higher level' approach tends not to distinguish between the particular pressures and opportunities affecting different parts of the coastal zone (accepting that while prescriptive zoning may not be appropriate, there needs to be an acknowledgement that the coast is not a uniform environment). The current strategic approach also tends to rely on targeting existing programmes of work, with entirely new programmes of work only given priority when they involve a range of partners (but this may be more to do with funding constraints than the way in which management plans are developed).

### **National networking**

- 4.13. The Heritage Coast Forum was established with funding from the Countryside Commission to develop a network for the exchange of information and best practice between Heritage Coasts. It was facilitated firstly with the Centre for Environmental Interpretation at Manchester Metropolitan University, and then with Bournemouth University.
- 4.14. The Centre for Environmental Interpretation was contracted to manage the Forum and were employed in a managerial capacity. They also supervised, organised and facilitated a costings study where every Heritage Coast was asked to set up a methodology and cost out how much it would take to for example:
- remove the top five eyesores;
  - open up all footpaths; and
  - effectively remove litter from their coastline.
- 4.15. The Forum had four representatives from each corner of the country – North, East Coast, South East and South West.
- 4.16. One of the Forum's great strengths was its use as a practical officer-level network, providing an *esprit de corps* and a resource base for Heritage Coast staff. It was not primarily a Forum for policy development, although it appears that Forum members were responsible for responding to the Countryside Commission's first policy document towards Heritage Coasts in 1991, contributing substantially to the revised policy in 1994 that established the national purposes and targets of Heritage Coasts.
- 4.17. Coastnet took over from the Heritage Coast Forum in 1996 when the programme of Countryside Commission funding ceased. It registered as a charity and received pump priming from the DETR, Countryside Commission and English Nature for

three years. With the decline in Countryside Commission funding to Local Authorities for Heritage Coasts, and with the rise of the concept of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), Coastnet has adopted a broader and more strategic (i.e less practically orientated) focus.

- 4.18. After the initial pump priming lapsed, Coastnet hoped that this income would be replaced by membership fees but this has not proved viable (the organisation nearly became insolvent in 2002). Coastnet is currently largely grant-led, which has influenced the work that it undertakes. Roughly half of its funding currently comes through an EU Interreg scheme, Corepoint, with the remaining funding coming from a variety of sources including the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 4.19. Current activities are wide ranging. Recent workshops have covered the Marine Bill, four annual conferences are organised, a quarterly magazine is published and there is a web-based resource.
- 4.20. There are clearly opportunities for Coastnet to develop its role as a forum for the exchange of best practice amongst coastal initiatives, particularly in relation to implementation of ICZM, the Marine Bill and the second round of Shoreline Management Plans. If Coastnet is to maintain greater long term continuity, there would appear to be merit in it receiving a level of core funding to underpin its project-based work.

## 5. FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT

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- 5.1. This Chapter describes the current administrative and staffing arrangements through which Heritage Coast purposes are delivered, and the funding that is used to do this. As with the previous Chapter, it contrasts the situation that now applies with that of the early 1990s when the Heritage Coast programme received national core funding from the Countryside Commission.

### Administration

- 5.2. As noted above, local authorities have always had the prime responsibility for delivering Heritage Coast purposes, supported by the Countryside Commission and Agency. However there has been a marked shift in the way Local Authorities have delivered this. During the 1980s most Local Authorities had received funding from the Countryside Commission to establish Countryside Management Services, and during the early 1990s many were receiving funding to employ Heritage Coast officers. **Figure 5.1** shows that, as a result, most Local Authorities maintained dedicated Heritage Coast Services, often within the Environmental Service Department of the Authority that also oversaw the work of the Countryside Management Service.
- 5.3. A few Heritage Coasts had projects that drew support from a wider partnership and thus had a more free-standing lead body (for instance the North Norfolk and South Foreland – Dover-Folkestone Heritage Coasts). The two island Heritage Coasts were managed by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) - the Isles of Scilly Environmental Trust on Scilly and the Landmark Trust on Lundy. Only two Local Authorities clearly identified their Heritage Coast service as part of a wider AONB-wide service (Suffolk and the two Isle of Wight Heritage Coasts). In the two National Parks, the Park Authority was the lead body.
- 5.4. By the time this study took place the majority of Heritage Coasts were led by their respective AONB Partnership (or the National Park Authorities). Exceptions to this are the South Foreland and Dover-Folkestone Heritage Coasts which remain within the remit of the White Cliffs Countryside Project and the three Heritage Coasts in North Cornwall which continue to be managed by the North Cornwall Countryside Service (all others now come within the remit of the Cornwall AONB unit). The situation is complex in the Purbeck and West Dorset Heritage Coasts, with the County Council appearing to deliver most Heritage Coast purposes through the Jurassic World Heritage Site but with the AONB Partnership taking a broader strategic lead.
- 5.5. Among the Heritage Coasts that lie outside these statutory protected landscapes, there are a variety of different administrative arrangements, again with the Local Authorities taking the lead. In the Durham Heritage Coast (defined in 2001), the Local Authorities lead a broad-based partnership. Flamborough Headland and Spurn now fall under East Riding Council's Sustainable Development Unit which answers to a Council Committee. Lundy remains under the control of the Lundy Company (a wholly owned company of the Landmark Trust which tenants the island from the National Trust). St Bees Head is nominally looked after by Copeland District

Council, although in reality the RSPB (that own the cliffs) and the National Trust (that have an interest in purchasing some of the land behind the cliffs) are most involved in the site.

**Figure 5.1. The lead bodies in each Heritage Coast in 1993 and 2006**

Heritage Coast	Lead Body 1993	Lead Body 2006
North Northumberland	Northumberland Heritage Coast Service	Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership
Durham	<i>Heritage Coast not defined in 1993</i>	Durham Heritage Coast Partnership
North Yorks & Cleveland	North York Moors National Park Authority	North York Moors National Park Authority
Flamborough Headland	Flamborough Headland Countryside Service	East Riding Council Sustainable Development Unit
Spurn	Spurn Heritage Coast Service	
North Norfolk	Norfolk Coast Project	Norfolk Coast AONB Partnership
Suffolk	Suffolk Heritage Coast/AONB Service	Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Partnership
South Foreland Dover-Folkestone	White Cliffs Countryside Project	White Cliffs Countryside Project
Sussex	East Sussex Heritage Coast Service	South Downs Joint Committee
Hamstead Tennyson	Isle of Wight Countryside Management Service	Isle of Wight AONB Partnership
Purbeck West Dorset	Dorset County Council Countryside Recreation Group	Jurassic Coast World Heritage Coast Steering Group
East Devon	East Devon Heritage Coast Service	East Devon AONB Partnership
South Devon	South Devon Heritage Coast Service	South Devon AONB Partnership
Rame Head Gribbin Head - Polperro The Roseland	South Cornwall Heritage Coast Service	Cornwall AONB Partnership
The Lizard	Lizard Peninsula Projects	
Penwith	Penwith Peninsula Project	
Godrevy – Portreath	Tehidy-Hayle Countryside Management Service	
St Agnes	Carrick District Council	
Isles Of Scilly	Isle of Scilly Environment Trust	Isles of Scilly AONB Partnership and Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust
Trevoze Head Pentire Pt - Widemouth Hartland (Cornwall)	North Cornwall Heritage Coast Service	North Cornwall Coast & Countryside Service
Hartland (Devon)	Hartland Heritage Coast Service	North Devon AONB Partnership & Coast & Countryside Service
North Devon	North Devon Heritage Coast Service	
Lundy	Landmark Trust	The Lundy Company (Landmark Trust)
Exmoor	Exmoor National Park Authority	Exmoor National Park Authority
St Bees Head	Copeland Borough Council	Copeland District Council

Source 1993: Heritage Coast Forum (1993). Source 2006: This study



## The role of steering groups and involvement of partner bodies

- 5.6. The role of steering groups or forums to involve the statutory and non-statutory partners is an important one. In the past it would appear that there was significant variation between the Heritage Coast Services in this respect. Some were steered by Local Authority representatives and a Countryside Commission nominee only (such as North Northumberland) while others included a wide range of other environmental and countryside management bodies (such as North Norfolk). As noted in the previous Chapter, a number of consultees to this study were critical at the relatively poor level of involvement of partner organisations in Heritage Coast activities during the early 1990s (i.e. delivery of Heritage Coast management plans was seen as the province of Local Authorities and not other statutory and non-statutory bodies). It is likely that the lack of a broad-based steering group, forum or partnership in some of the Heritage Coasts at this time was at least partly to blame for this.
- 5.7. The situation has now changed (**Figure 5.2**). As noted earlier in this Chapter, it is the AONB Partnerships (through their Joint Advisory Committees -JACs), and National Park Authorities (NPAs) that usually take the lead in delivering Heritage Coast purposes. These bodies have a relatively broad membership base (JACs include non-Local Authority interests by agreement whereas NPAs have Secretary of State appointees). However, the reliance on these broad-based bodies means that they generally have little coastal focus and expertise.

**Figure 5.2 Current steering group arrangements for each Heritage Coast**

Name	Steering Group	Name	Steering Group
North Northumberland	AONB JAC	Rame Head	AONB JAC
Durham	Heritage Coast P'ship	Gribbin Head - Polperro	
N Yorks & Cleveland	Coastal Forum SG	The Roseland	
Flamborough Headland	None	The Lizard	
Spurn		Penwith	
North Norfolk	AONB Core MG	Godrevy - Portreath	
Suffolk	AONB JAC	St Agnes	
South Foreland	White Cliffs C'side	Isles Of Scilly	AONB JAC
Dover-Folkestone	Project SG	Trevose Head	North Devon Coast & C'side Service
Sussex	AONB Cons Board	Pentire Pt - Widemouth	
Hamstead	AONB SG	Hartland (Cornwall)	Lundy Marine MG
Tennyson		World Heritage Site	Lundy
Purbeck	SG	Hartland (Devon)	AONB JAC
West Dorset		North Devon	
East Devon	AONB JAC	Exmoor	National Park Authority
South Devon	AONB JAC	St Bees Head	None

Source: This study. JAC: Joint Advisory Group. MG: Management Group. SG: Steering Group

5.8. There are exceptions to this lack of coastal focus in the way that the interests of Heritage Coasts are overseen in the statutory protected landscapes:

- The coastal AONBs (particularly Northumberland Coast and Norfolk Coast) can justifiably argue that coastal interests are well represented on their Joint Advisory Committees (JAC).
- In the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast, the North York Moors National Park Authority maintains a Coastal Forum that steers the coastal projects officer. This body has representatives from Local Authorities (including two from parish councils), English Nature, the Environment Agency, NE Sea Fisheries Committee and National Trust. In the other National Park with a Heritage Coast (Exmoor), there is no forum with a specific coastal remit.
- The South Downs Joint Committee has recently recognised the special needs of the AONB's coastal zone (the Sussex Heritage Coast) and a Coastal Forum, which includes landowner and NGO representatives, is being established to guide the new project officer and management plan.
- Dorset has both the Jurassic Coast Heritage Coast steering committee and a Coastal Forum (with the latter taking the lead on off-shore issues), although as noted above, the AONB JAC is seeking to take an overall strategic role in coastal management issues.

5.9. Outside the AONBs and National Parks, there are a variety of arrangements:

- The Durham Heritage Coast Partnership was formed in 2001 and has 16 bodies represented (five local community interests, four Local Authorities, three statutory agencies and four non-governmental bodies). It meets quarterly.
- On Lundy, English Nature chairs a Marine Management Group which meets twice a year and includes representatives from English Heritage, the National Trust and Landmark Trust, the Devon Sea Fisheries Committee and the chair of a less formal marine advisory group.
- The Flamborough Headland, Spurn and St Bees Head Heritage Coasts do not appear to have any current steering groups or forums overseeing the delivery of Heritage Coast partnerships.

### **Core funding**

5.10. As noted in Chapter 3, Heritage Coasts were one of the Countryside Commission's flagship programmes in the 1980s and early 1990s. Local Authorities received significant levels of core funding from the Commission to employ Heritage Coast officers and wardens and to prepare and deliver management plans. Information collected in the 1993 Heritage Coasts Gazetteer indicates the amount of funding given to the Heritage Coasts by the Countryside Commission varied from 10 to 50 percent (with around one third receiving 50 percent), and the remainder of funding coming from local authorities. The sources of funding received by each AONB at the outset of the initiative (as recorded in the Gazetteer) can be seen in Appendix 3.

- 5.11. By 1998 Countryside Agency funding had moved substantially towards the funding of AONBs rather than Heritage Coasts. Because of the broader remit of AONBs it is difficult to estimate how much of this funding was allocated to delivering Heritage Coast purposes. Information collected centrally by the Countryside Agency from their regional offices showed that, in 1998, most of the AONBs with Heritage Coasts estimated that around half of their core funding was used for delivering Heritage Coast purposes. In 2006 core funding of AONBs had risen but, arguably, the proportion of their budgets allocated to delivering Heritage Coast purposes had fallen (reflecting the priority attached to drawing up and delivering the statutory management plans and the relatively low priority allocated to coast-specific objectives in these plans). For this reason, it is difficult to track changes in the national funding allocated to Heritage Coasts in AONBs in the last ten years. However, there is no doubt that it has fallen since the Countryside Commission's Heritage Coast grant aid ended. **Figure 5.3** indicates the sources of funding currently used to deliver Heritage Coast purposes.
- 5.12. There are three examples from AONBs where Heritage Coast activities receive specific funding that does not come from the AONB units' core budget:
- In North Cornwall (Trevose Head, Pentire Point – Widemouth and the Cornwall section of the Hartland coast) the District Council has continued to fund the Coast and Countryside Service and does so without core funding from the Countryside Agency. All other Heritage Coasts in Cornwall are covered by the Cornwall AONB unit. As noted below, North Cornwall District Council has been successful in drawing in other external funding for coastal project work.
  - In the South Foreland and Dover-Folkestone Heritage Coasts, which lie within the Kent Downs AONB, the White Cliffs Countryside Project now receives all its core funding from the constituent Local Authorities and from Eurotunnel (the latter being a long term funding partner, partly in recognition of its ownership of Samphire Hoe where the coast was extended with spoil from the tunnel).
  - In Dorset, the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site received funding from a wide range of partners, including the Countryside Agency, Regional Development Agency, English Nature and non-governmental bodies such as the National Trust and Dorset Wildlife Trust.
- 5.13. Outside the AONBs, the Countryside Agency no longer makes funding available to Local Authorities for the delivery of Heritage Coast purposes with the exception of the Durham Heritage Coast now on a diminishing taper of grant aid. The more modest activity in the Flamborough Headland and Spurn Heritage Coasts is funded by East Riding Council. On Lundy, English Nature is the majority funder of staff involved in the Marine Nature Reserve and environmental management on the island, with the Lundy Company covering the remainder of costs.

**Figure 5.3. Sources of funding used to deliver Heritage Coast purposes, 2005-06**

Heritage Coast	Core Funders	Project Funders
North Northumberland	AONB: CA 75%, Las 25% split 3 ways	LA's >30%, CA < 30%, LEADER+ >20%, Aggregate Levy 7.5%. Interreg 7.5%. Also EA & EN
Durham	LA 100%	LA <100%, HLF
North Yorkshire & Cleveland	NPA 30%, BC 24%, CC 36%, EA 6%, EN 4%	NORTRAIL (EU)
Flamborough Headland Spurn	LA 100%	LA 100%
North Norfolk	AONB: 75% CA, 25% LA	CA 50%, LA 50%, SDF (Defra),
Suffolk	AONB: CA 50%, Las 50%. 2 Estuaries officers funded also by RSPB/Docks/EA/EN/LA	CA, LA + contributions from Visitor payback scheme - CONNECT - AONB Cottage rental proj. Also supported by Harwich Haven authority and Felixtowe and Ipswich Docks
South Foreland	LA – Shepway 25%, Dover 25%, Eurotunnel 50% (40k for Samphire Hoe), Interreg (EU RD Fund)	
Dover- Folkestone		
Sussex	AONB: BC, TC, NT etc	
Hamstead Tennyson	AONB: LA, CA	SEEDA (£1500 for HC 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary leaflet
Purbeck	AONB: CA grant aid £250k	Regional Development Agency, EN, NT, WLT, private voluntary
West Dorset		
East Devon	Not Available	Not Available
South Devon	AONB: 75% CA, 25% LA - SH DC & CC	CA, LA, HLF since 2003 + EU funded since 1998
Rame Head, Gribbin–Polperro, The Roseland, Lizard, Penwith, Godrevy-Portreath, St Agnes	AONB: £5k x 6 LA's, £26k CC, NT £3k + CA contribution	£100's to £Millions, eg. CYCLEAU, EU funded Interreg IIIb project
Isles Of Scilly	AONB: 75% CA, >20% UA	Mostly CA, EN
Trevoze Head	100% LA - annual budget	EU Objective I funding, HLF last year - Atlantic Coast and Valleys Project. Since '99 some SWRDA funding for visitor centres. INTERREG funding 3yr access project
Pentire Pt – Widemouth		
Hartland (Cornwall)		
Hartland (Devon)	AONB: 75% CA, 25% split evenly between 3 CCs + DCs	EA, LEADER+
North Devon		
Lundy	English Nature, Lundy Co.	
Exmoor	100 % NPA	Additional from EN, EH, RDA, HLF, FC (but little to coastal work). Some income from Visitor centres and publications
St Bees Head	None	None

Source: Consultees to this study (Appendix I)

### **The impact of the loss of Countryside Agency core funding**

- 5.14. With a loss of funding has come a loss of staff and, as a result, the ability to intervene directly in coastal management. As explored further below, where alternative funding has been sought to retain staff numbers, this has required the objectives of the new funding body to take priority over Heritage Coast purposes.
- 5.15. However, with some Heritage Coasts the loss of funding has had a less serious effect. At Sussex the ending of Countryside Commission funding was not seen to have any great impact, but this may also be attributed to the fact that the Heritage Coast definition is not seen as key to the area in management terms. This is mainly the case where there are many other active organisations/bodies addressing coastal issues, or where the County Council has picked up the funding. With the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coasts for example, the local authorities were able to 'plug the gap'. As Dorset is part of the SW Coast Path National Trail, part of the funding for this is directed to the Heritage Coast. One example is the Isle of Wight that has a Coastal Management Service that deals with the strategy and hard engineering for the coast. Sussex is also a unique example where many authorities cover the Heritage Coast and loss of funding was felt less severely. In North Cornwall the ending of Countryside Agency funding didn't make a huge difference due to the District Council considering that the benefits of the Heritage Coasts service (in attracting visitors and tourism) justified picking up the financial shortfall.

### **Project funding**

- 5.16. Many consultees commented that the Heritage Coast 'brand' had proved to be a useful vehicle for attracting funding, particularly for specific projects. The breadth of Heritage Coast purposes, and their articulation in public management plans, provides a clear indication to funders of the multiplicity of linked public benefits that projects can deliver. Examples of funding obtained for projects in Heritage Coasts include:
- In the North Northumberland Heritage Coast, the AONB has used funding from a variety of sources (including LEADER +, the Aggregates Levy and EU Interreg fund) to fund a variety of its projects.
  - The Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB Partnership has used funding from a variety of statutory and non-statutory partners (including core AONB funding, the Environment Agency, English Nature, RSPB and the Ports Authorities) to fund the salaries of its two Estuary Project Officers.
  - As part of the efforts to protect and promote the area around the South Foreland Valley and the cliff tops, the White Cliffs Countryside Project have joined forces with the Parish Council and the National Trust, using funding from Interreg (European Regional Development Fund) and the Countryside Agency (through the Kent Downs AONB unit), to design and install a self-guided walking route taking in many of the areas of interest.
  - The North Cornwall Coast and Countryside Service has used EU Objective I funding and Heritage Lottery Funding to support the Atlantic Coast and Valleys Project (for more details see Chapter 6). Funding from the Regional

Development Agency has been used to support visitor centres, and the service is part of the EU Interreg 3c project on recreational access along the coast.

- North Devon AONB has used Environment Agency funding to undertake work on the Taw-Torridge Estuary in The Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh Project, which was set up to address coastal issues around the Estuary, such as flood risk issues and habitat destruction as a result of sea level rise. This project is being undertaken in partnership between the Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service, the Environment Agency, English Nature and the Tarka Country Trust. The AONB has also used LEADER+ funding to co-fund a coordinator post to assist a Community Profiling Project.
- In 2004 the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership used funding from the South East Regional Development Agency to help publicise a Heritage Coast Festival (marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the definition of their Heritage Coasts)

### **Staffing**

- 5.17. With most Heritage Coasts there were no staff specifically dedicated to delivering Heritage Coast objectives. The staff were most commonly AONB staff and their numbers varied from one to seven. There were some differences in interpretation as to what constitutes delivering Heritage Coast objectives. Some specified what percentage of their time was spent on Heritage Coast Issues, whereas others simply specified that very little time was spent on such issues (despite the fact that a lot of their work was carried out on the coast). In relation to this, it was a common view that Heritage Coast objectives are fulfilled as a part of general coastal management but the staff involved may not be specifically aware of this.

There were exceptions to this, for example at Dorset there is an active ranger team and there are currently two dedicated Heritage Coast rangers that are actively funded by the County council. With Durham the Heritage Coast is still very much an active part of management objectives. There are five members of staff (coastal, project and educational officers) who spend 100 percent of their time on Heritage Coast issues.

- 5.18. The commitment of individual people to remain employed in the coastal sector is significant. In several of the Heritage Coasts, such as the Norfolk Coast, North Cornwall sections and North Devon coasts, staff currently working in these areas (for AONB units or other Local Authority bodies) have spent most of their careers in coastal management, changing jobs (and in some areas locations) as funding and organisational structures have changed. This personal commitment provides a valuable continuity of expertise which has perhaps not been officially recognised and valued.
- 5.19. The Purbeck and West Dorset Heritage Coasts demonstrate this point well. Terry Sweeny has been involved with Heritage Coasts since 1975, and in particular was involved with the Purbeck pilot. He highlighted that the original Heritage Coast ranger from 1975 only retired in 2005, and in West Dorset they are working with only their third ranger in 25 years. Many of the other staff are also still working within the County Council on coastal issues.

5.20. In the Isle of Wight it is the Coastal Management Service at the Council who see themselves actually responsible for delivery on the ground. The AONB unit have more of a facilitating role.





## 6. PROGRAMME DELIVERY

- 6.1. This Chapter assesses the extent to which the original Heritage Coast national purposes and targets have been met by current management structures. It then reviews the way that Heritage Coasts have addressed locally defined objectives. Examples of current good practice taking place are highlighted, as well as instances where local conditions have been unfavourable.
- 6.2. The national purposes and targets for Heritage Coasts that were published by the Countryside Commission in 1992 are listed in full in Chapter 2 (paragraphs 2.19 and 2.22). For ease of reference, they are summarised in **Figure 6.1**, below.

**Figure 6.1. Summary of Heritage Coast national purposes and targets**

Purpose	Targets
1. The conservation of natural beauty and cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strip of grassland or semi-natural vegetation behind cliff edge or beach</li> <li>• The removal or amelioration of eyesores</li> <li>• The protection and enhancement of landscape features</li> </ul>
2. Enjoyment and understanding by the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A continuous coast path; and all rights of way properly managed</li> </ul>
3. Maintaining the environmental health of inshore waters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Litter clearance and collection of the highest standards for amenity beaches</li> <li>• All intensively used beaches to be designated as 'bathing beaches'</li> </ul>
4. Taking account of the economic and social needs of communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No targets</li> </ul>

### **Purpose 1. The conservation of natural beauty and cultural heritage**

- 6.3. The first Heritage Coast purpose is almost synonymous with the first purpose of both National Parks and AONBs, except for the lack of reference to cultural heritage in the purpose of AONBs. To that extent this purpose has been successfully picked up by both National Parks and AONBs where they are the principal management structure in place on the Heritage Coast. In terms of delivering on this purpose in coastal areas, one of the key factors seems to be the extent to which the AONB or National Park is dominated by its area of coastline. Where the coast is more of a dominant feature, then broadly speaking the extent to which conservation and enhancement activities are taking place along the coast is also higher.
- 6.4. The following are examples of current activities taking place amongst the Heritage Coasts which are meeting this objective:
- In South Foreland/ Dover Folkestone 'The White Cliffs Countryside Project' was established in 1989 to develop sustainable tourism and help to preserve the environment and local distinctiveness of the area. The Project is now in effect responsible for administering these Heritage Coast areas. This coast contains five percent of all the chalk grassland in Britain, and the Kent Downs AONB identifies an increase in the extent and quality of chalk grassland in favourable management as part of its vision, with policies on its conservation and enhancement.

- The aim of the Durham Heritage Coast team has been to continue enhancing the natural beauty of the coastline following the Turning the Tide reclamation project, making it more accessible and valued by local people and visitors. As noted later in this Chapter, community interpretation and appreciation of the natural beauty are core to the work undertaken in this most recently defined of the Heritage Coasts.
- The Isle of Wight is unusual in that it has a Coastal Management Service that deals with the hard engineering and management of the coast (hydrological modelling for example). Through the AONB, landscape improvement grants look to reinforce local character. Like many of the Heritage Coasts it is covered by many nature conservation designations including a National Nature Reserve, Special Protection Area and SSSI.
- In the Cuckmere Estuary in the Sussex Heritage Coast, a restoration project involving the reversion of a heavily engineered (the previous canalisation of the river and its tributaries) area back to a natural state is addressing a range of local environmental objectives. The aim is to re-establish natural processes and as a result create sustainable flood risk management. However, there have been local objections to the project due to fact that the reversion to natural processes will result in a highly valued (and iconic) piece of countryside with fields and recreational grassland areas being replaced with wet grassland and marsh areas (intertidal habitat).

**Box 6.1. Atlantic Coast and Valleys regeneration project**

Developed by the North Cornwall Coast and Countryside Service in Partnership with English Nature, The National Trust, Eden Project, the RSPB, local farmers and the District Council, this project seeks to increase biodiversity through landscape management on parts of the coastline. It is estimated that 8 new jobs will be created and 135 existing jobs safeguarded by reverting 15 km<sup>2</sup> of coastal farmland to develop a varied coastal habitat and landscape, encouraging a predicted £150,000 extra annual spend in the region by 2010. Funding is being sought from sources such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, Objective 1 and Defra. It is intended that once the major capital works including activities such as scrub removal, nutrient stripping, fencing and training, have been undertaken then land management environmental payments from schemes such as Environmental Stewardship will safeguard the area through appropriate management.

**Target: Strip of grassland or semi-natural vegetation behind cliff edge or beach**

- 6.5. The key factor in the delivery of this target has been the ability to influence the land use patterns of private landowners, particularly farmers. The advent of the national agri-environment schemes in the 1980s (funded as part of the England Rural Development Programme since 2000) introduced the main mechanism for achieving this. The Countryside Stewardship Scheme has been the most important scheme in most Heritage Coasts (the main alternative, the Environmentally Sensitive Area Scheme has only been available in the Suffolk, Sussex, Penwith and Exmoor Heritage Coasts). Both schemes have now been replaced, for new applications, by the Environmental Stewardship scheme. These schemes are not administered by Local

Authorities (but by the Rural Development Service, transferring to Natural England in October 2006, on behalf of Defra) and the Heritage Coasts have had to lobby for the targeting statements, against which applications are scored, to prioritise agreements which maintain or create permanent grassland against the coastal edge. Where the targeting statements provide this prioritisation, Local Authority staff are able to facilitate agreements between landowners and Defra. There appears to have been varying success in the ability of Heritage Coasts to deliver this influencing role against the strength of other competing priorities for the schemes.

- 6.6. Several consultees suggested that the agriculturally marginal nature of much coastal farmland (whether it be low-lying grazing marsh subject to inundation or cliff-top heathland and scrub) puts it at risk of agricultural abandonment under the new regime of support from the Common Agricultural Policy, where previous incentives to manage land receiving subsidy are much reduced. This may increase the need for this land to receive agri-environment scheme support if its environmental value is to be maintained.
- 6.7. Four of the current Heritage Coast management documents reviewed contained objectives, policies or actions that may not have specifically referenced this target, but were taking positive measures towards meeting it.
- 6.8. Examples of current practices taking place in the Heritage Coasts that are meeting this target include:
  - In South Foreland/ Dover Folkestone there has been good progress towards achieving a strip of grassland along the length of the Heritage Coast, particularly at the Warren in Folkestone. However there are problems with land slips and scrub invasion, and at South Foreland there is a narrow strip where there is an issue with 'coastal squeeze' (with erosion and farming).
  - On the Isle of Wight this target is helped by the Site of Special Scientific Interest running almost the full length of the Tennyson Heritage Coast, which features vegetated sea cliffs with a 20m buffer of uncultivated cliff top.
  - In Dorset an example of this target being met is in the Fleet catchment, where funding from the Countryside Stewardship Scheme has been used to create buffer strips of grass against the edge of this coastal lagoon as a means of reducing enriching runoff from adjoining arable farmland.

***Target: The removal or amelioration of eyesores***

- 6.9. The assessment (undertaken by this study) of current Management Plans found policies or actions relating to this target in six Heritage Coasts. Examples of specific activities identified by the staff in these areas include:
  - Faced with coastal erosion of his land, a landowner in the Suffolk Heritage Coast had taken matters into his own hands by creating his own sea defences, dumping hundreds of tonnes of topsoil in front of the cliff face. This has been seen as unsightly and the AONB is intervening to dissuade the landowner from continuing with this measure.

- This target is being addressed in Durham at Nose's Point, the 'Second Gateway' into Durham, located in Dawden. This is a reclaimed colliery site, at the edge of developed areas and a natural entry point, or gateway, to the undeveloped sections of the Heritage Coast. The Heritage Coast Partnership are involved with ensuring that views from this site are scenically attractive.
- Northumberland Coast AONB has a small grant scheme project to remove unsightly rubble and concrete piping dumped on the beach at Alnmouth as an artificial sea defence, and re-grading and re-seeding of the natural dune front (dunes being one of the key landscape features in the AONB) as a natural sea defence.

**Box 6.2. OFGEN Funding for Under-grounding power lines**

OFGEN has made £2.9 million available during the period of 2005 - 2010 for works to underground visually intrusive electricity cables within four AONBs in the East of England, including Suffolk Coast and Heaths, Norfolk Coast, Dedham Vale and the Chilterns, as well as Norfolk Broads National Park. Proposed schemes will be vetted by the AONBs to ensure they are cost-effective, achievable and will demonstrate a worthwhile positive benefit on the landscape. One such example is in the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Unit who have been working to implement a pilot scheme at Blythburgh Marshes alongside the regional network EDF Energy and Blythburgh Parish Council. Following support from the local community up to 2km of overhead low voltage line will be 'under grounded' clarifying views across the Blyth Valley highly designated protected landscape.

In the North East NEDL have also made funding available for the under grounding of electricity cables in protected areas. In a similar process individual AONBs and Parks have put forward priority areas which NEDL are assessing against their own criteria. There will therefore soon be a programme of under grounding begun in the Northumberland Coast AONB. The Durham Heritage Coast is not included, as the programme is only available in statutory designations.

**Target: The protection and enhancement of landscape features**

- 6.10. The third national target falling under the first purpose called on Local Authorities to protect and enhance the landscape features identified in their Heritage Coasts Management Plans. Nearly all of the current management plans reviewed set out objectives, policies or actions meeting this target.
- 6.11. Local Plan policies are a key mechanism for protecting the landscape in general, and key landscape features, in particular from visual intrusion or damage as a result of built development. The role of such policies are reviewed later in this Chapter (paragraph 6.33)
- 6.12. Examples of other activities hitting this objective are:
  - In the Durham Heritage Coast a 1,200 space car park at an old tourist site was reverted, and the landform was changed to reflect the dunes and grassland.

- The North Cornwall Coast and Countryside Service facilitated the conservation and restoration of the 16th Century Poundstock church and Guildhouse (the only surviving one of its kind in Cornwall), winning a HLF bid for £28,300 funding.

## **Purpose 2. Enjoyment and understanding by the public**

- 6.13. Given that, as identified in earlier Chapters, Heritage Coast purposes are now overseen in most Heritage Coasts by AONBs, it is interesting to note that the AONBs are slightly more constrained in relation to public recreation and enjoyment than Heritage Coasts. The Countryside Commission's 1991 Policy Statement for AONBs stated "*the demand for recreation should be met insofar as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty*", implying that promotion of recreation in AONBs should not be seen as an end in itself. No such constraint applies in National Parks.
- 6.14. Again because AONBs and National Parks are now the principal management structures in place in Heritage Coasts, processes being undertaken to meet this objective fall mostly under their management. As noted in Chapter 4, the differences between how this objective is being met today compared to when Heritage Coast management structures were in place is more visible only at the micro management level. Generally these differences are in terms of the focus on more coastal processes by Heritage Coasts' management in the subject matter of events programs and the hands on visitor management.
- 6.15. Examples of activities taking place within the Heritage Coasts that are currently meeting this target include:
- South Foreland/ Dover Folkestone – The White Cliffs Countryside Project has an extensive programme of guided walks (including within the two Heritage Coasts) considered to be the third largest programme in the country. Numerous family-oriented programs consisting of guided walks, cycle rides, horse riding, canoeing and orienteering are run aimed at helping people enjoy the coastline and area of the cliffs. They also publish "Countryside News", a newsletter detailing conservation activities and volunteer opportunities. Alongside opening up access they also provide information on access trails. During the period of core funding for Heritage Coasts there was a special programme set up to deliver this. But with the withdrawal of this funding and the resultant cost cutting, most of this detailed access work and interpretation has ceased.
  - North Norfolk Coast AONB produced a Visitor Management Strategy in 1995 providing a clear framework for future decisions and action in the area, stating that the locally designated SSSI/cSAC should not be promoted to visitors and they should be directed to less sensitive areas. The AONB also established and maintains a popular free annual newspaper called 'The Norfolk Coast Guardian' available to both residents and visitors. The AONB unit attends the local Wells Festival, promoting biodiversity and sensitive use of the coast to families and schools at this annual open air event. The Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy is linked to the AONB Management Plan and led to the development of the 'Coast Hopper' bus service providing a link between local coastal villages along the coastline, and was voted as runner-up in the Best Service category of the North Norfolk Tourist awards 2004.

- The Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site Designation has created a focus on visitor Interpretation (with related policies in the management plan). This status is also expected to lead to increased expectations on the quality of signs and publications about the Site. The Heritage Coast has also been responsible for the establishment of a chain of visitor centres.
- North Devon AONB Unit is undertaking work to create an interpretation strategy for the whole AONB. Newsletters are now published, which never happened during the period of Heritage Coast core funding. However the extent of public events such as guided walks, talks, and general interface with the public has declined since Heritage Coast days.
- The Isles of Scilly AONB unit produce a range of self-guided walks leaflets, educational and curriculum packs, as well as facilitating public talks and organising local produce events.
- A visitor centre which was renovated from a derelict building by the Spurn Heritage Coast team subsequently closed down when Heritage Coast funding was withdrawn. This has since been taken over by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

***Target: A continuous coast path; and all rights of way properly managed***

- 6.16. This was the sole national target falling under the second Heritage Coast purpose which, for the purpose of review, is split into its two component parts. Success on the implementation of a continual coastal path has varied both in the past and under present day management structures due to a range of contributing factors including land use, ownership, topography and available resources.
- 6.17. Rights of Way management and maintenance is generally undertaken at more of a local / intermediate government level, and with the passing of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act in 2000, Local Authority duties with regards to rights of way management were further increased. The requirement for Local Authorities to draw up Rights of Way Improvement Plans by November 2007 will increasingly impact on rights of way management within all areas including Heritage Coasts.
- 6.18. In the past it would appear that Heritage Coast rangers often intervened directly in the management of rights of way, undertaking maintenance and repairs on the paths within their coastline. Current practice suggests that, in the AONBs, activity is more strategic, such as promoting guided and circular walks, promotional leaflets and producing walk programmes and perhaps annual leaflets.
- 6.19. Current examples of the extent of coastal paths and rights of way management include:
- In Durham there is no continuous coast path due to the coasts recent history as an industrial and heavily degraded landscape. However with the ongoing improvements to the Heritage Coast, there is now scope for the creation of such a coast path. The Heritage Coast team have expressed interest in this target, particularly to provide a coastal cycling route, and at present are conducting baseline studies to assess the feasibility of such a project.

- Exmoor National Park employs one ranger whose principal work is the management and maintenance of the South West Coast path where it runs through the National Park.
- In Northumberland the ongoing EU funded 'North Sea Trail project' seeks to establish a coastal path from Cresswell to Berwick, covering the entire Heritage Coast and beyond by 2007.

**Box 6.3. South West Coast Path National Trail**

Cornwall and Devon's Heritage Coasts are estimated to be 90 - 100% covered by the South West Coast Path National Trail, which covers over 630 miles of Devon and Cornwall's coastline. The path is managed by the Countryside and Ranger services from a variety of bodies including Cornwall County Council, Devon County Council, Dorset County Council, Exmoor National Park Authority, Plymouth City Council, Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust and Defence Estates (MoD). It is thought there are roughly 65 rangers and wardens maintaining the Coast Path on a day to day basis, undertaking tasks such as repairing sign posts or stiles, cutting back vegetation and clearing drainage ditches. This maintenance work keeping the path in good condition is estimated to cost £560,000 annually, and is principally funded by the Countryside Agency (75%), with the remainder coming from the managing organisations (25%).

- 6.20. In contrast with these 'successes' there are examples where there have been difficulties in creating a continuous coast path:
- Suffolk Coasts and Heath AONB has had trouble with certain sections of creating a continuous coastal path. Landscape topology causes diversions inland creating the need for permissive paths. The issue has not always attracted the priority it needs at a local level if such permissive paths are to be negotiated with landowners and a continuous network of paths created.
  - In the Isle of Wight land ownership difficulties prevent the continuity of the coastal path where the land diverts inland. For instance Hamstead has a Ministry of Defence firing range and, outside the Heritage Coast, Crown Estate land again prevents continuity.
  - Maintenance of the South West Coast Path in Dorset suffers from issues with landslides causing gaps in the path.

**Purpose 3. Maintaining the environmental health of inshore waters**

- 6.21. The third purpose of Heritage Coasts is the most significant in that it lies outside the AONBs and National Parks remit. As discussed in Chapter 4, the boundary of AONBs runs down to the Mean High Water Mark, and the boundary of National Parks is often not determined, and thus priorities and activities undertaken by these management structures beyond this boundary is invariably limited.
- 6.22. During the period of core funding to Local Authorities for Heritage Coast teams, activity under this purpose most frequent took the form of organised beach cleans and public awareness raising about pollution of beaches and the sea by the public.

This activity is now less frequent, although there are examples (see below under the targets).

- In the Isles of Scilly, local dive schools have voluntarily taken up policing of maritime activities, particularly recreational, such as commercial fare paying passenger boats licensed by the council, with regards to maritime responsibility and littering, anchoring etc. A byelaw was passed by the local Sea Fisheries Committee, which was confirmed in late 2002. This byelaw seeks to protect scallop populations by limiting the number of dredges that may be made by fishing vessels to two per side to a distance of four miles from the shore.

**Box 6.4. Shoreline management work in Exmoor National Park**

Porlock Bay is a shingle ridge located 9 km west of Minehead within Exmoor National Park. Various authorities and landowners have actively worked to maintain the ridge as a sea defence against flooding of Porlock Marsh since the early nineteenth century, maintaining agricultural and recreational use of the marsh during much of this period. Over this period several serious breaches of the ridge led to significant flooding, each requiring greater restoration work than the previous. In October 1996 storms from the remnants of Hurricane Lily caused the ridge to be breached and consequential consultations between relevant management bodies decided to cease maintaining the ridge as a sea defence and to allow natural processes to prevail. The site has been closely monitored and realignment work behind the ridge is helping to re-create tidal habitats and the transitions to brackish, freshwater and terrestrial habitats. This policy is allowing the area to readjust to current climatic patterns and sea level change which has resulted in some habitat loss, mostly coastal grazing marsh and the creation of salt marsh developing in areas where coastal grassland was previously dominant.

- 6.23. The extent to which Heritage Coasts implemented management works and measures within their inshore waters seems to have been varied. One reason for this was the lack of clarification on the extent of inshore waters. Northumberland Heritage Coast introduced a Management Plan boundary extending to a 10 fathom contour; however the extent to which other Heritage Coasts introduced such a boundary is thought to be limited but remains unknown.
- 6.24. Active management and policy focus on inshore waters is addressed by a variety of other definitions, most of them with nature conservation objectives. These include European Marine sites, Voluntary Marine Conservation Areas, No Take Zones and Coastal Preservation Areas.
- 6.25. **European Marine Natura 2000 sites.** Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. Where areas of Heritage Coastline fall within the boundaries of these European habitat designations, these are looked to by AONBs to cover marine management issues.



**Box 6.5. The Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast European Marine Site**

This management scheme encompasses the candidate SAC designated Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast, under the 1992 EC Habitats Directive and Lindisfarne which was designated as an SPA for birds under the 1979 EC Birds Directive. Under the Habitats and Birds Directive, the interest features of the site must be maintained in 'favourable condition' and EN and Scottish National Heritage, as the two statutory nature conservation areas, produced a Regulation 33 Advice Package describing conservation objectives for the site. A Management Group comprising of 26 relevant authorities and bodies have produced a management scheme describing the activities taking place within the site and describing how they will be managed to meet the conservation objectives. The conservation objectives cover a variety of interest features including reefs, sea caves, sand and mud flats and Grey Seals as well as the birdlife. Twelve members of the group also provide funding for the employment of an EMS officer who coordinates the implementation of this management plan and to provide annual reports on progress. Work undertaken includes the monitoring of pollution from sources such as agricultural run off and sewage, the management of sand flats for nutrient reduction and preventing eutrophication from occurring, workshops and providing advisory comment.

The EMS officer works closely with the AONB staff team to delivery joined up coastal and marine management initiatives where possible, including the production of a joint guide book series, a joint marine litter group, events, talks etc.

- 6.26. **Voluntary Marine Conservation Areas.** Cornwall has 5 VMCA's around its coastline located at Polzeath (VMWA), St. Agnes, Helford (Estuary), Fowey (Estuary) and Looe. The Seven Sisters VCMA is located in Sussex. VMCA's by the nature of their voluntary status have varied management, practices and initiatives. Their activity has concentrated on activities to promote visitor understanding and enjoyment of inter-tidal and marine based habitats and wildlife (several of them have a web based presence). For the most part, they have had little impact on protecting or enhancing the marine environment itself, and this is probably the reason why their profile as conservation designations has declined in recent years.

**Box 6.6. Polzeath Voluntary Marine Wildlife Area**

Polzeath Voluntary Marine Wildlife Area states that its primary aim is to "Increase people's awareness and enjoyment of marine wildlife and encourage their interest in marine environmental issues". Between April and September a Marine Wildlife Warden is based locally to provide information about the varied interests of the VMWA. A caravan Visitor Centre is located adjacent to the Tourist Information Centre each spring and summer providing information to visitors, and an events programme encourages people to become more involved with the marine environment.

- 6.27. **No Take Zones.** These voluntary schemes have taken place particularly in the South West (Lundy, St Agnes, Rame Head). With the exception of Lundy, where the No Take Zone has been underpinned by bylaws of the Devon Sea Fisheries Committee and has been supported by local fishermen, they have largely failed through the lack of statutory powers or bodies backing up their implementation.
- 6.28. **Coastal Preservation Areas** were first designated around Devon by the County Council in 1966 to safeguard unspoilt stretches of coastline from unnecessary development, and are identified in the Structure Plan and gain policy based protection in the relevant areas local plans.
- 6.29. Other activities taking place within the Heritage Coasts that are currently meeting this purpose include voluntary dive surveys (e.g. mapping out sea bed types found in the near-shore zone), 'adopt a beach' schemes and sewage cleanup works.

**Target: Litter clearance and collection of the highest standards for amenity beaches**

- 6.30. This third Heritage Coast purpose had two national targets, of which this is the first. Although perhaps not as frequently as Heritage Coasts once organised, most coastal AONBs still support annual litter picks. Litter predominantly comes from two sources, that left by visitors to the coast, and marine borne litter. In some areas, particularly the Isles of Scilly, the latter of these is more of a concern.
- Suffolk Coasts and Heath AONB unit monitor and manage 'Beachwatch' and eight groups that undertake 'adopt a beach' schemes carrying out beach cleans approximately four times per year. Additionally three local beaches at Aldeburgh, Sizewell and Thorpeness have all met the required standards of cleanliness and management set by ENCAMS to be awarded Rural Seaside Awards.
  - In North Yorkshire and Cleveland, 'record and find' exercises are organised by the National Park which are reported to the marine conservation society. They also promote 'adopt a beach' schemes.
  - In Sussex and Dorset Heritage Coasts, the Local Authorities organise and lead volunteer-based beach cleans.

**Target: All intensively used beaches to be designated as 'bathing beaches'**

- 6.31. Water quality is addressed by UK and EU bathing water directives, which are currently under the administration of Defra and regulated by the Environment Agency. Voluntary bathing water award schemes play an important role in promoting water quality and beach cleanliness, such as the Blue Flag Scheme, the Seaside Awards and the Good Beach Guide. Although these initiatives have been adopted extensively by Local Authorities, they are not often featured as an aspect of work by AONBs or National Parks in their Heritage Coasts.
- In North Yorkshire and Cleveland all but one of the beaches within the Heritage Coast has been given a 'blue flag'. The Environment Agency is heavily involved. The one that has not received the designation is as a result of poor water quality due to agricultural runoff.

- The majority of the beaches at South Foreland and Dover Folkestone are heavily used. The beach at St. Margaret's Bay on the South Foreland coast one of the few beaches that failed to get this designation due to dog walking being prevalent on the beach.

#### **Purpose 4. Taking account of the economic and social needs of communities**

- 6.32. The fourth and last purpose of Heritage Coasts is reflected within the general guiding principles of AONBs and National Parks. The Countryside Agency's 1991 Policy Statement on AONBs set out that in pursuing the primary purpose of the designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.

Under Section 62 of the 1995 Environment Act, in pursuing the purposes of the Parks, relevant authorities have a duty to promote the economic and social well-being of their local communities. This new duty neither makes additional financial resources available nor gives the National Park Authorities any new powers, but reinforces the need for the Parks to positively regard the welfare of their local communities.

In view of this it is not surprising that AONB units and National Park Authorities with Heritage Coasts are actively pursuing this fourth Heritage Coast purpose . However, by addressing needs across the whole of their AONB or Park, it can be argued that there is less attention to the needs of coastal communities. The following examples demonstrate good practice:

- In the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast, a partnership with the LEADER programme (5 years ago) led to surveys in each parish to establish what the local community did and did not like and further ideas. The results of the surveys are still relevant today, ensuring that communities are supportive of, and able to prioritise conservation work that is carried out.
- The community is heavily involved in decision making at Durham, where the Heritage Coast is seen as an asset for future use, with the view that community participation and user level involvement and developing respect will benefit the area.
- North Devon AONB has a community liaison officer whose job is to reflect the economic and social needs of local communities within the programme of the AONB.

### **Box 6.7. The Cycleau Project**

The Cycleau project is funded by the EU INTERREG IIB programme. This trans-national project involves local communities in the planning and management of 11 different river catchment sites in SW England, NW France and NW. It involves many partners and communities in its implementation, aiming to create a shared, integrated approach to the planning and management of natural water resources in the coastal zone. The underlying principle behind the project is to positively influence land and water management practices and planning taking place inland because ultimately these affect what happens on the coast. The Cycleau Project intends to produce a roadmap that can be used by communities as a common approach to managing their own water environments, leading to sustainable economic activity and boosting environmental capacity. A learning culture amongst all projects involved should help to deliver integrated resource planning that takes account of whole catchment areas, resulting in positive inland and coastal environmental benefits.

One such project that has been created under funding from the Cycleau Project is the Helford Catchment Farm Advice and Grant Scheme. A Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) Conservation Adviser has been employed to work in the catchment for over two years now, engaging with around 40 farmers in the area. The aim is to encourage farmers within the catchment area to look objectively at their farm's impacts on the river arising from pollution such as surface runoff, nitrate leaching and soil particles carrying phosphates. Farm plans will be created covering issues such as soil, nutrient and manure / slurry management, the protection of watercourses, the identification of valuable habitats and the practicalities of undertaking Agri-environment schemes. Funding has also been provided for a capital grant scheme (providing a maximum of €2000 per farm) to carry out simple practical works to help reduce diffuse pollution. The Farm Grant Scheme will initially be administered by the FWAG adviser, alongside a grant panel comprising representatives from the local authority, the Environment Agency and the Voluntary Marine Conservation Area Group.

### **The setting and delivery of local objectives**

- 6.33. The Planning Framework Section of Planning Policy Guidance 20: Coastal planning (County Structure and Local Plans, 4.15) set out that:

*“The Government acknowledges the success of Heritage Coasts in articulating appropriate planning and management policies. The planning policies to be pursued in Heritage Coast areas should be incorporated within development plans. The role of the Heritage Coast and the uses and activities which are or are not likely to be permitted should be defined. Local plans should contain clear policies on public access to the coast.”*

- 6.34. Although the study found that many consultees with experience of delivering Heritage Coast purposes were not familiar with local plan policies, the following comments are relevant to planning documents currently or recently in use. The degree to which this was carried out seems to have been varied. In most areas it would appear that Heritage Coast status has become increasingly less evident in the recognition it receives by the appropriate planning authorities. Over time as updates and revisions of Structure and Local Plans have been produced, consultees have

commented that the representation of Heritage Coasts within these documents has fallen.

- 6.35. In the main, where local and regional planning documents had picked up on the guidance in PPG 20, policies predominantly took the form of development control.
- 6.36. In contrast, the management planning process, which has been a major focus of activity in most AONBs during the last three years, (paralleled by the community planning process), has introduced a new emphasis on the involvement of local communities in determining the priorities for their area. The following are examples of this process:
- North Norfolk AONB prepared its current Management Plan published in 2004 through a review of the existing 1998 management strategy for the AONB, published by the Norfolk Coast Project (NCP). An extensive public consultation 'Land and Life' was undertaken with local communities, organisations and interest groups in 1997. Over 1,600 questionnaires were received and analysed, and a series of local meetings involved about 120 people. The AONB also established an annual Norfolk Coast Community Conference in order to extend and strengthen the partnership between local people and management agencies. Local policy objectives extend involvement outside the AONB steering group with the North Norfolk Coast Advisory – part of the European Management Community and who also sit on the EMS. The AONB recently employed a Community officer whose aim is to further improve local involvement.
  - In South Devon, Torridge District Council's Local Plan talks about the Heritage Coasts of both Hartland and Lundy within Chapter 6 on Conservation and Environmental Strategies. A map showing the Hartland Heritage Coast is included and four Heritage Coast targets are set out:
    - to conserve and enhance natural beauty;
    - to protect heritage features;
    - to support management measures; and
    - to take account of the economic and social needs of small coastal communities.It is stated that the designation is not statutory and relates to land management issues, and as such no specific development control policy relates to the Heritage Coast.
  - In Durham the community is involved in establishing vision and local policy objectives, including through the annual forum. In this way the community has been able to propose new bylaws for dogs and horses on beaches following ratification by the Heritage Coast steering group.
  - The main locally-defined coastal objectives at Sussex are to maintain a functioning coastline and maintain and improve access (a policy that is complementary in terms of both the AONB and Heritage Coast).

**Box 6.8. Planning policy in Exmoor National Park recognising coastal issues**

Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2001-11 has a 'vision' for the coast including objectives and protective policies that include 4 development control policies protecting the coastline. The Somerset & Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review, adopted in April 2000, also has a development control policy which references Heritage Coasts:

*"Policy 15 Coastal Development - Provision for any development along the coast, including the Exmoor Heritage Coast, should be made within Towns, Rural Centres and Villages. Where development requires an undeveloped coastal location it should respect the natural beauty, biodiversity and geology of the coast and be essential in that location. New coastal developments should minimise the risk of flooding, erosion and landslip."*

The structure plan also noted that RPG 10: Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (1994) states that development plan policies should look to safeguard the whole of the regions undeveloped coast. The Heritage Coast designation is noted by this authority as a management tool by which the conservation, protection and enhancement of the undeveloped coastline can be promoted.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE OPTIONS

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- 7.1. This final Chapter draws together the overall findings of the report and considers how these relate to the current policy issues facing England's coastal zone. This study is not required to make firm recommendations for the future of the Heritage Coast designation (such considerations awaiting Natural England in October 2006). However, this Chapter ends by suggesting potential options for further consideration.

### **Past priorities attached to Heritage Coasts**

- 7.2. During the 20 year period to 1995, Heritage Coasts were one of the most high profile and influential programmes operated by the Countryside Commission. During this period, most Heritage Coasts in England demonstrated successful partnership working between the host Local Authority and the Countryside Commission. In a minority, such as St Bees Head, the initial interest of the Local Authority which led to definition of the Heritage Coast, was not translated into a lasting programme of work.
- 7.3. During this period Heritage Coasts were particularly active in visitor and landscape management, revolving around the post of the Heritage Coast officer, usually based within the Local Authority Countryside Management Team. But most Heritage Coasts seem to have been less successful over this period at providing a strategic overview of land use and landscape protection. Few Heritage Coasts saw the levels of partnership working that are now considered fundamental to rural development initiatives and landscape designations.
- 7.4. Since 1995 the priority attached to Heritage Coasts by the Countryside Agency has declined, in favour of support for the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and work with rural communities (such as the Market Towns Initiative). As funding by the Countryside Agency to Local Authorities with Heritage Coasts has declined, Heritage Coast units have tended to dissolve, with Local Authorities usually transferring their funding and interest to their AONBs. There are notable exceptions to this, including the Durham Heritage Coast (which was defined in 2001) and, for obvious reasons, some of the coastal AONBs and National Parks where coastal issues remain paramount.

### **Overlap with AONBs and National Parks**

- 7.5. The large majority of Heritage Coasts (89% by area) occur in the statutory protected landscapes of AONBs (82%) and National Parks (7%). For these Heritage Coasts the objectives pursued by the AONB and National Park are now the primary focus of landscape conservation, public recreation and enjoyment.
- 7.6. Most of the coastal AONBs and National Parks are not reflecting the distinctive purposes of Heritage Coasts in their management plans and activities – but there are significant exceptions (see below). For some of them, distinctively coastal priorities are more evident in their management plan activities, which often reflect previous commitments inherited from the period of more active Heritage Coast funding, than

in their overall management objectives, which have been developed more recently in line with national policy priorities.

- 7.7. Compared to the activity that took place in the 'hey day' of Heritage Coasts, AONBs are now less involved in 'hands on' management but take a more strategic role and rely on the activities of partner organisations to deliver AONB purposes, including the national agencies and local authorities. This difference is less marked in the two National Parks that contain Heritage Coasts (the North York Moors and Exmoor) where their warden service maintains an active presence 'on the ground'.

### **Funding and staffing**

- 7.8. As a direct result of the absence of dedicated national funding from the Countryside Agency, most Local Authorities with Heritage Coasts do not have staff dedicated to delivering Heritage Coasts purposes or specifically coastal programmes of action. Instead these Authorities see their coasts as a part of the wider protected landscape.
- 7.9. Where staffing posts with a stronger coastal remit are in place, this is usually the result of new external funding acquired since the cessation of Countryside Agency funding (for instance Eurotunnel and Interreg 3b funding in Dover-Folkestone; a variety of partner funding in Purbeck and West Dorset related to World Heritage Site status and English Nature funding on Lundy).
- 7.10. Exceptions where Local Authorities have maintained staff with a strong coastal remit without significant external funding are the predominantly coastal AONBs (particularly North Northumberland, North Norfolk and the Isles of Scilly) and the Pentire Point to Widemouth and Hartland Heritage Coasts (where the North Cornwall District Council maintains a coastal officer in the Coast and Countryside Service).
- 7.11. The personal commitment of a number of people to stay working within the field of coastal management, despite changes in funding and organisational arrangements, is worthy of note.

### **National co-ordination and networking**

- 7.12. The Heritage Coast Forum provided a valuable function during the period to the mid 1990s when it received core funding to bring together and disseminate experience from Heritage Coast units and, on occasion, to contribute to national policy. Although this role has been partly taken on by the charity Coastnet, its remit is now far wider and its funding is now tied to specific projects. As a result, there is little ongoing sharing of best practice between the AONBs and other bodies working in the Heritage Coasts. This brings the danger that future programmes of work will be developed by Natural England or Defra that are not easily able to take account of the lessons being learned in Heritage Coasts.

### **Delivery of Heritage Coast purposes**

- 7.13. Conservation of natural beauty and their enjoyment by the public remain the priorities in most Heritage Coasts now, as they did in the early 1990s, reflecting the similarity with the purposes of National Park and AONB designation (accepting that



recreation is not a free standing purpose in AONBs but is pursued in connection with natural beauty).

- 7.14. The agri-environment schemes (mainly the Countryside Stewardship Scheme in the past and now the Environmental Stewardship scheme) have been key mechanisms for maintaining and enhancing the natural beauty of the wider landscape backing the coast. For this to be achieved, it has been important that the local targeting statements for the schemes identify the coastal zone as a priority against competition from other areas and issues. Local Authorities and other agencies supporting Heritage Coast purposes have an important role to play in influencing Defra's targeting of these schemes and in facilitating applications by landowners.
- 7.15. In relation to the second purpose of Heritage Coasts, of promoting public enjoyment and understanding of the Heritage Coast, there has been a general decline in 'hands on' visitor and countryside management in favour of more generic promotion and interpretation, particularly in most of the AONBs.
- 7.16. This same shift from direct intervention to a more strategic approach in which delivery is undertaken by a range of partner organisations, is evident across all of the purposes of Heritage Coasts. While regretting the reduction in direct intervention by Heritage Coast or AONB staff, many consultees recognise the benefits of this more integrated approach, which reflects the changed national priorities established for AONBs. There appears to be more synergy between the objectives being pursued by all statutory (and most non-governmental) bodies than was previously the case, although the time and effort needed to create this synergy (for instance through AONB Management Plans) has, during the last few years, probably reduced the focus on actual delivery by these bodies.
- 7.17. The needs and views of local communities and businesses appear to receive greater attention in Heritage Coasts now than they did in the early 1990s. This would appear to be the result of the broader strategic and partnership-based approach being taken by AONBs and National Parks (particularly in relation to the development of their Management Plans) as well as to the greater national policy priority applied to social inclusion in relation to the environment. This is particularly evident in the Durham Heritage, North Yorkshire & Cleveland and Dover-Folkestone Heritage Coasts.
- 7.18. Many consultees to this study commented that Heritage Coast status has been, and continues to be, valuable as a 'badge' that has the support of local communities. This status is considered helpful to promote the area for tourism, to highlight the need for policies to address development pressure, and to attract external funding for environmental work. It would appear that, with the cessation of national core funding for Heritage Coasts, this marketing and awareness raising aspect of Heritage Coast status is one of the key reasons why it continues to be kept alive by Local Authorities (when in almost all respects, Heritage Coast purposes are now delivering under different programmes of work).

## Activities in the marine environment

- 7.19. Heritage Coasts have one purpose that is not covered in AONBs and National Parks - the environmental health of inshore waters. This appears to have been narrowly interpreted in the 1990s (relating mainly to freedom of beaches from litter and to bathing water quality) and is now not particularly evident in the current objectives being pursued in AONBs and the other bodies responsible for delivering Heritage Coasts purposes.
- 7.20. Most coastal AONBs suggested that they would like to have more involvement in the marine environment but felt constrained by their terrestrial boundary. Heritage Coasts, where there is more involvement in marine protection and management issues, are those where there are specific marine designations that justify this involvement. Examples include Lundy (with a Marine Nature Reserve) and Dorset and East Devon Heritage Coasts (where the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site is concerned about maintaining natural coastal processes).
- 7.21. Most of the consultees to this study were conscious of the emerging national activity in relation to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and the Marine Bill, and were aware of the second round of Shoreline Management Plans (SMP), but there seemed to be little significant local involvement in these initiatives to date.
- 7.22. Of course this is unlikely to remain the case since Local Authorities will need to become closely involved in both ICZM and their SMPs. However, with most AONBs being seen as terrestrial bodies with little expertise on marine planning or shoreline management, it seems likely that responsibility for involvement in these new programmes, when they require local involvement, will fall to staff outside the AONB teams, unless there is national direction that AONB Partnerships and National Park Authorities should be involved.
- 7.23. While AONBs and National Parks may not have the technical background in marine and shoreline policy, they have strengths which may suit them to greater involvement. Firstly, their inclusive structures and increasingly strategic methods of working, with governance structures involving both Local Authorities and national agencies, means that they are well placed to bring diverse interest together. Secondly, and allied to this, their broad policy remit, covering environmental, social and economic purposes (with the former given primacy) give them advantages over other agencies that have a more narrowly defined purpose and experience.

## Options for the future

- 7.24. These conclusions point the way to a number of options for the future of the Heritage Coast designation. These are presented as simple bullet points which can be explored further when Natural England's work programme is established:
- **A national policy development and delivery focus.** It is important that the particular mix of policy challenges facing England's most scenically attractive coastal areas are recognised at a national level. The combination of high demand for development, high levels of recreational use, a fragile natural environment and, in some coastal communities, the need for economic and social renewal, requires policy solutions that will be unique, or at least specially tailored, to this

part of England's landscape. This suggests a strengthened coastal policy unit in Natural England, working closely with relevant government departments to develop and deliver the appropriate policy solutions. It also suggests a renewed role for a national forum and network of people working in Heritage Coasts.

- ***Heritage Coast purposes within AONBs and National Parks.*** Overall, the four national purposes of Heritage Coasts seem well suited to the current demands. To the extent that three of the purposes are very close to the purposes of AONBs and National Parks (which as statutory designations carry more weight) there seems little justification for a separate focus on these Heritage Coast purposes within these designations. Partnership working and management plans that aim to deliver these three purposes seem, on balance, to be succeeding (accepting that the recent process of strategic planning in AONBs must now be turned into delivery by the various partners). As noted further below, the one unique purpose of Heritage Coasts does require special attention.
- ***Heritage Coast purposes outside the statutory landscape designations.*** In the relatively small length of coastline lying outside AONBs and National Parks, it would appear that delivery of Heritage Coast purposes depends on an ongoing commitment of national funding to Local Authorities. When this funding ceases, experience suggests that activity declines. Natural England must make a decision as to whether it wishes there to be active programmes of management planning and delivery in these Heritage Coasts. For such programmes to take place, these Local Authorities will need ongoing support, including funding.
- ***The Heritage Coast brand.*** Even where Local Authorities are not particularly active in delivering Heritage Coast purposes, there appears to be a high regard for Heritage Coast status because of the way it draws attention to the special qualities of the coast and can attract funding for specific projects. This is further reinforced by interest from a few Local Authorities in defining new sections of Heritage Coast. If Heritage Coast status is to be maintained as a credible 'brand' standing for coastline of the highest scenic quality, there will be merit in Natural England retaining 'ownership' of the status as an active designation, albeit accepting that in most respects the purposes of the designation will be delivered through the statutory landscape designations.
- ***The inter-tidal and marine remit.*** The third purpose of Heritage Coasts, relating to the environmental health of inshore waters, is not found in the other landscape designations and is one that has yet to find full expression. However, the advent of the Marine Bill and the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management give this purpose a new relevance. Under the current situation, where AONBs and National Parks are uncertain about their remit beyond the mean high water mark, it seems unlikely that they will have a major role to play in these programmes. However, their pursuit of sustainable development and their ways of working through strategic partnerships suggest that they could make a valuable contribution. If this is to take place, their role will need to be formally recognised and they will need national support from Natural England or Defra to gain the necessary technical expertise to allow them to contribute.



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## APPENDIX I. CONSULTEES TO THIS STUDY

**Table I. Primary consultees in each Heritage Coast**

Heritage Coast	Contact	Organisation
North Northumberland	Mary Lewis	Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership, Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 2EF Tel: 01670 534088 Email: <a href="mailto:Coastaonb@northumberland.gov.uk">Coastaonb@northumberland.gov.uk</a>
Durham	Niall Benson	Durham Heritage Coast Partnership, Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL. Tel: 0191 3833351. Email: <a href="mailto:niall.benson@durham.gov.uk">niall.benson@durham.gov.uk</a>
N Yorkshire and Cleveland	John Beech	North York Moors NPA, The Moors Centre, Danby, Whitby, N.Yorkshire, YO21 2NB. Tel: 01439 770657. Email: <a href="mailto:john@heritage-coast.fsnet.co.uk">john@heritage-coast.fsnet.co.uk</a> ,
Flamborough Headland	Tom Fitzgerald	Principal Sustainable Communities and Coastal Management Officer, Corporate Policy and Strategy Directorate, Community and Sustainable Development Service, East Riding of Yorkshire Council HU17 9BA Tel: +44 (0) 1482 391718 Email: <a href="mailto:Tom.Fitzgerald@eastriding.gov.uk">Tom.Fitzgerald@eastriding.gov.uk</a>
Spurn		
North Norfolk	Tim Venes	North Norfolk Coast Partnership, The Old Courthouse, Baron's Lane, Fakenham, Norfolk, NR21 8BE Tel: 01328 850530 Email: <a href="mailto:tim.venes@norfolk.gov.uk">tim.venes@norfolk.gov.uk</a>
Suffolk	Simon Hooton	Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB Unit, Dock Lane, Melton, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 IPE Tel: 01394 384948 Email: <a href="mailto:simon@suffolkcoastandheaths.org">simon@suffolkcoastandheaths.org</a>
South Foreland	Kirk Alexander	White Cliffs Countryside Project. 6 Cambridge Tce, Dover, Kent, CT16 1JT. Tel: 01304 241806 Email: <a href="mailto:kirkalexander@whitecliffscountryside.org.uk">kirkalexander@whitecliffscountryside.org.uk</a>
Dover_Folkestone		
Sussex	Catherine James	South Downs Joint Committee. Seven Sisters Country Park, Exceat, Seaford, E.Sussex, BN25 4AD. Tel: 01323 870280 Email: <a href="mailto:cjames@southdowns-aonb.gov.uk">cjames@southdowns-aonb.gov.uk</a>
Hamstead	John Brownscombe	Isle of Wight AONB Unit. Innovation Centre, St Cross Business Park, Monks Brook, Newport, IOW, PO30 5WB. Tel: 01983 823855 Email: <a href="mailto:john.brownscombe@iow.gov.uk">john.brownscombe@iow.gov.uk</a>
Tennyson		
Purbeck	Tim Badman	Coast and Countryside Policy Manager (Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site Team Leader). Dorset County Council, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 2DL. Tel: 01305 224285 Email: <a href="mailto:t.badman@dorsetcc.gov.uk">t.badman@dorsetcc.gov.uk</a>
West Dorset		
East Devon	Chris Woodruff	E.Devon AONB Partnership. E.Devon District Council, Knowle, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 8HL. Tel: 01395 516551 ext 2063 Email: <a href="mailto:cwoodruff@eastdevon.gov.uk">cwoodruff@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>

Heritage Coast	Contact	Organisation
South Devon	Robin Toogood	South Devon AONB Unit, Follaton House, Plymouth Road, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5NE Tel: 01803 861384 Email: <a href="mailto:Robin.toogood@southhams.gov.uk">Robin.toogood@southhams.gov.uk</a>
Rame Head	Paul Walton	Cornwall AONB Unit Fal Building, Treyew Road, Truro, TR1 3AY Tel: 01872 322350 Email: <a href="mailto:info@cornwall-aonb.gov.uk">info@cornwall-aonb.gov.uk</a> ,
Gribbin Head - Polperro		
The Roseland		
The Lizard		
Penwith		
Godrevy – Portreath		
St Agnes		
Isles of Scilly	Anna Cawthray	Isles of Scilly AONB Unit Old Wesleyan Chapel, Garrison Lane, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly, TR21 0JD Tel: 01720 423486 Email: <a href="mailto:acawthray@scilly.gov.uk">acawthray@scilly.gov.uk</a>
Trevoze Head	Charlie David	North Cornwall District Council Coast and Countryside Service, 3-5 Barn Lane, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL13 1LZ Tel: 01208 265644 Email: <a href="mailto:charlie.david@ncdc.gov.uk">charlie.david@ncdc.gov.uk</a>
Pentire Pt - Widemouth		
Hartland (Cornwall)		
Hartland (Devon)	Dave Edgecombe	North Devon AONB Unit Bideford Station Railway Terrace Bideford EX39 4BB Tel: 01237 423655 Email: <a href="mailto:dave.edgcombe@devon.gov.uk">dave.edgcombe@devon.gov.uk</a>
North Devon		
Lundy	Nicola Saunders	The Lundy Company, Lundy, Bristol Channel, Devon, EX39 2LY Tel: 01271 863636 Email: <a href="mailto:warden@lundyisland.co.uk">warden@lundyisland.co.uk</a>
Exmoor	Graham Wills	Exmoor NPA, Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9HL Tel: 01398 323665 Email: <a href="mailto:GLWills@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk">GLWills@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk</a>
St Bees Head	John Hughes, Regeneration Strategy Manager	Economic Devel. & Local Plans Dept, Copeland Borough Council, Catherine St, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA28 7NY Tel: 01946 852585



## Table 2. Other consultees who contributed evidence

Jeremy Barlow	National Trust Property Manager, Cumbria
Sarah Bentley	Dorset AONB Manager
Frank Chester	Project Manager, Environment Agency, Worthing
John Clements	Planning officer, Exmoor National Park Authority
Kate Cole	Coastal Biodiversity Officer, East Sussex County Council
Tim Collins	English Nature, Head of Coastal Conservation, Also past HC officer for Spurn
Gemma Cousins	Planner, Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council
John Clements	Exmoor National Park Principal Planning Officer (Policy & Community)
Steve Crummay	Natural Environment Service, Cornwall County Council (involved in CC management of HC before handover to AONBs in 2003)
Mel Cunningham	Area property Manager, National Trust, Yorkshire
Liz Davey	AONB manager for Isles of Scilly, 2001-2005.
Chris Davis	English Nature, Marine Conservation Officer, Devon and Cornwall
Roger Dewhurst	Planning, Kerrier District council
Lys Dyson	Senior Archaeology Officer, Kent County Council
Paul Green	Planning Policy Coordinator, Torridge District Council
Tracy Hewitt	Assistant Solent Forum Officer
Jerry Hindle	Countryside Manager, Suffolk County Council
Nick Johannsen	AONB Director, Kent Downs AONB
Kevin Johnson	Landscape Architect, City of Sunderland
Janet Lister	Devon and Cornwall National Trust Nature Conservation advisor
Sarah Manning	Countryside Officer, The Countryside Agency, SW Region
David Mawer	Senior Conservation Warden, Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust
Alex Midlen	Coastnet Chair
Peter Murphy	Coastal Strategy Officer, Maritime Archaeology Team, English Heritage, London
Catherine Ridout	Devon Wildlife Trust
Caroline Roberts	Devon Wildlife Trust, North
Denis Rooney	Property Manager, National Trust, Durham
Leah Stockdale	Flamborough/Spurn European Marine Site contact
Terry Sweeney	Countryside and Access Manager, Dorset County Council
Graham Swiss	Forward Planning officer, South Hams District Council
Aidan Winder	Devon County Council Coastal Officer
Ray Woolmore	Consultant to the Countryside Agency (and carried the national Heritage Coast brief for the Countryside Commission/Agency for over 15 years)



## **APPENDIX 2. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CULLEN, 1982**

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### **‘An evaluation of the Heritage Coast programme in England and Wales’**

#### **Recommendation 1: Task force**

The Commission should establish a task force of people skilled in planning and conservation to examine the implications of changes in the development control system to the Commission’s programmes, and to identify ways in which objectives can be achieved under the new system.

#### **Recommendation 2: Training/shadowing**

With the appointment of new Heritage Coast staff, the Commission should assist in their training for the job by ensuring they get as much knowledge from the pilot exercises and other established Heritage Coasts as possible, best achieved by arranging for staff to spend some days accompanying established Heritage Coast sufferers in their daily duties.

#### **Recommendation 3: Target promotional material to audience**

The Commission should target its promotional material so that specific material is prepared for professional planners and interest groups (reprints of technical documents), elected members (overviews of problems and how they can be resolved) and more general material for public education.

#### **Recommendation 4: Workshops**

The Commission should ensure that Heritage Coast staff periodically have the opportunity to meet in a workshop session. This would also enable the Commission’s regional staff to keep up to date with what happens outside their region, and will assist authorities just starting on Heritage Coast programmes in benefiting from past experiences. The meetings would also demonstrate the Commission’s on-going interest in the programme.

#### **Recommendation 5: Review financial accounting**

The Commission should review its financial accounting system to provide information that could be useful in the Commission’s programme. Grants made should be allocated against a specific programme.

#### **Recommendation 6: Use cost-effectiveness to allocate resources**

The Commission should consider using cost-effectiveness as one of the criteria for allocating resources between programmes. This requires having reliable and valid measures of cost-effectiveness (requiring field data to be collected periodically either by regional staff or by air-photo survey, repeated every 5 years).

#### **Recommendation 7: Better monitoring**

The Commission should strengthen its management of Heritage Coast to ensure better monitoring of the programme and to ensure that the programme can develop in response to external conditions.

#### **Recommendation 8: Better collaboration with the National Trust**

Discussions should be held with the National Trust to encourage and possibly assist them in the better interpretation of their coastal properties. Consideration should also be given to negotiating with the Trust to assist in the “shop front” sense in the public education work of the Commission.



## APPENDIX 3. STAFFING AND FUNDING, 1993

Abstracted from Heritage Coast Forum, 1993

**Table 1. Staffing, 1993**

Heritage Coast	Number of posts			
	HC Officer	Asst. HC Officer	HC ranger	Other
North Northumberland	1			
Durham	Heritage Coast not in place in 1993			
N Yorkshire & Cleveland	No separate HC Service, one NP Ranger is defined as HC Ranger			
Flamborough Headland	1		1	
Spurn	1		1(S)	
North Norfolk	Norfolk Coast Project Officer 1, Norfolk Coast Project Assistant			
Suffolk	1 (pt)		2	2 HC Wardens, 2 Rangers, 1 Project Officer
South Foreland	Post within Management Service: 1 Project Manager, 2 Project Officers (Two			
Dover- Folkestone	countryside mangt. rangers planned for 1992/93)			
Sussex	1			1 Marine Ranger (pt C), 2 Visitor Centre Rangers (pt C)
Hamstead	1 Project Officer, 1 Assistant Project Officer, Newtown LNR Warden (1C), 2			
Tennyson	Rangers , 1 Country Park Ranger (S)			
Purbeck	4 Wardens, 2 Wardens not entirely on HC (S)			
West Dorset				
East Devon	1		1	Assistant Ranger (S)
South Devon	1		2	
Rame Head	1	1		Clerk/Typist (pt), plus Mount Edcombe
Gribbin Head - Polperro				Country Park Staff.
The Roseland	1	1		Clerk/Typist (pt)
The Lizard				Projects Officer
Penwith				Penwith Peninsula Project Director , Project Officer
Godrevy - Portreath	Managed as part of Tehidy-Hayle Countryside Management Service			
St Agnes	None at time of survey			
Isles Of Scilly	1 (Trust Director)			Field Officer (also Deputy HC Officer), Secretary (pt)
Trevose Head				Assistant Countryside Officer, Graphic Designer , Admin Officer (pt), Visitor Centre
Pentire Pt - Widemouth	1	1		Manager (S).
Hartland (Cornwall)				
Hartland (Devon)	1		1	Ranger (S)
North Devon	1		1	Ranger (S)
Lundy				Lundy Agent, Lundy Warden
Exmoor	No separate HC Service, one NP Ranger is defined as HC Ranger			
St Bees Head	1			

## Table 2. Funding, 1993

Heritage Coast	% CC funding	% County Councils funding	% District Councils funding	% Other funders	1992 annual core budget	1992 annual capital budget
North Northumberland	50%	25%	25%		£15,000	£9,000
Durham	Heritage Coast not in place in 1993					
N Yorkshire & Cleveland						
Flamborough Headland	10%	45%	45%		£42,440	£10,820
Spurn	14%	35%	35%	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust 11%, English Nature 5%	£28,000	£12,000
North Norfolk	50%	25%	25%		£80,000	
Suffolk	50%	50%			£145,000	
South Foreland	16%	16%	38%	Eurotunnel 15% English Nature 15%	£100,000	£60,000
Dover- Folkestone	16%	16%	38%	Eurotunnel 15% English Nature 15%	£100,000	£60,000
Sussex	50%	50%			£100,000	
Hamstead	12%	77%	11%		£298,860	£30,000
Tennyson						
Purbeck						
West Dorset						
East Devon	48%	36%	16%		£43,000	£23,500
South Devon	46%	35%	19%		£84,210	£26,600
Rame Head	38%	24%	33%	National Trust 5%	£58,000	£30,000
Gribbin Head - Polperro						
The Roseland						
The Lizard	50%	50%			£30,000	
Penwith						
Godrevy - Portreath	No separate HC Budget					
St Agnes						
Isles Of Scilly						
Trevose Head						
Pentire Pt - Widemouth						
Hartland (Cornwall)						
Hartland (Devon)	33%	33%	33%		£81,000	£42,000
North Devon	33%	33%	33%		£52,000	
Lundy	Jointly funded by Landmark Trust (main source) and English Nature					
Exmoor	All funding work on the HC comes from the NPA (no separate HC budget)					
St Bees Head	50%	12.5%	25%	12.5% RSPB/Private		